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THE ENDURING VISION

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

VOLUME II : SINCE 1865

CONCISE SEVENTH EDITION

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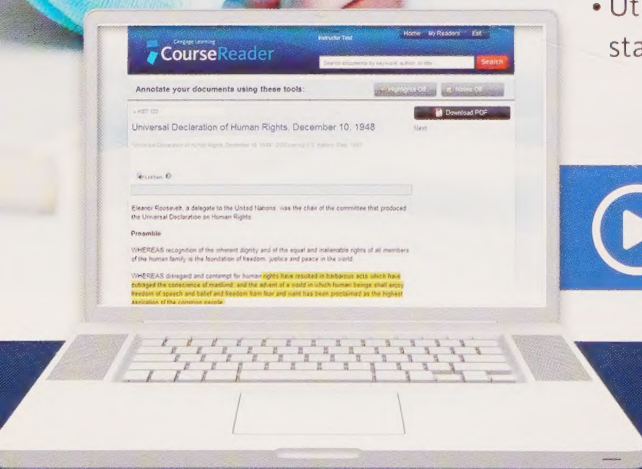


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THE Enduring Vision

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

VOLUME II: SINCE 1865

Concise Seventh Edition

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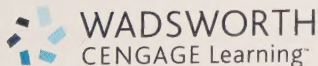
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Dedicated to the memory of Sandra Hawley

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Preface

Much has changed in America and the world since we began planning *The Enduring Vision* for college survey students more than twenty-five years ago. Some of these developments have been welcome and positive; others deeply unsettling. This new Concise Seventh Edition fully documents all of these changes for today's new generation of students, as well as the continuities that offer reassurance for the future.

Vision and Goals

The Concise Seventh Edition builds on the underlying strategy that has guided us from the beginning. We want our history to be not only comprehensive and illuminating, but also lively, readable, and true to the lived experience of earlier generations of Americans. Within a clear political and chronological framework, we integrate the best recent scholarship in all areas of American history. Our interest in social and cultural history, which shapes our own teaching and scholarship, has suffused *The Enduring Vision* from the outset, and it remains central. We integrate the historical experience of women and men of all regions, ethnic groups, and social classes who make up the American mosaic.

As we pursue these purposes in this Concise Seventh Edition, we welcome Karen Halttunen to the team of authors. A distinguished historian of nineteenth-century American social and cultural history who teaches at the University of Southern California, Professor Halttunen brings impressive strengths to our mission.

New Interpretations, Expanded Coverage

This edition of *The Enduring Vision* brings the work fully up to date, incorporating major developments and scholarship since the previous edition went to press. We have included the best of the new political history, stressing the social, cultural, and economic issues at stake in political decisions and debates. Religious history remains an important focus, from the spiritual values of pre-Columbian communities to the political activism of contemporary conservative Christian groups. We again offer extensive coverage of medicine and disease, from the epidemics brought by European explorers to today's AIDS crisis, bioethics debates, and controversies over health-care financing.

As with previous editions, we have added a number of new chapter-opening vignettes, including new vignettes on Edmund Ruffin, a fanatical defender of the South and slavery, and Martin Luther King, Jr. These vignettes introduce a central theme of the chapter and remind us that, in the last analysis, history involves the choices and actions of individual men and women.

Streamlined Organization

In our continuing quest to make the text clear and reader-friendly, we have rearranged some sections and reorganized some chapters. The post-World War II chapters, in particular, have been heavily reorganized to consolidate topical coverage and tighten the narrative. We have edited rigorously but without sacrificing any

substantive material. As a result, we have reduced the total number of chapters from thirty-two to thirty-one and shortened the text by about 10 percent.

Understanding history requires a firm grasp of geography, and *The Enduring Vision* has always emphasized the significance of the land in the interplay of historical events. Our extensive coverage of environmental history, the land, and the West is fully integrated into the narrative and treated analytically—not simply “tacked on” to a traditional account. An upgraded map program offers maps that are rich in information, easy to read, and visually appealing.

Visual Resources and Features

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The Crisis of Reconstruction

1865–1877

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Reconstruction Politics, 1865–1868

How did Radical Republicans gain control of Reconstruction politics?

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Reconstruction Abandoned, 1876–1877

What factors contributed to the end of Reconstruction in 1877?



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The Devastated South

“I never forget de day we was set free,” former slave Katie Rowe recalled. “Dat morning we all go to de cotton field early. After a while de old horn blow up at de overseer’s house, and we all stop and listen, ‘cause it de wrong time of day for de horn.” Later that day, after several more blasts of the horn, a stranger, apparently a Yankee, addressed the slaves. “Today you is free, just lak I is,” de man say,” Katie Rowe declared.

“You is your own bosses now.” The date was June 4, 1865. Rowe called it the day “that I begins to live.”

Emancipation in June 1865 brought an era of transition for the former slaves. “None of us know whar to go,” Katie Rowe remembered. The plantation overseer charged the former slaves “half de

crop for de quarter and all de mules and tools and grub.” His replacement offered better arrangements: “[W]e all got something left over after dat first go-out.” But new changes occurred. The next year the former owner’s heirs sold the plantation, “and we scatter off.” Katie eventually married a Cherokee man and moved to Oklahoma.

For the nation, as for Katie Rowe, the end of the Civil War was an instant of uncharted possibilities and a time of unresolved conflicts. While former slaves exulted over their freedom, their former owners were often as grim as the wasted southern landscape. Several thousand fled to Brazil, Mexico, or Europe, but most remained.

In most armed conflicts, the morale of the vanquished rarely concerns the victors. However, the Civil War was a special case, for the Union had sought not merely military triumph but the return of national unity. Therefore, the federal government in 1865 faced unprecedented questions. How could the Union be restored and the South reintegrated? Who would control the process—Congress or the president? Should Confederate leaders be tried for treason? Most important, what would happen to the 3.5 million former slaves? The freedmen’s future was *the* crucial issue of the postwar era, for emancipation had set in motion a profound upheaval. Before the war, slavery had determined the South’s social, economic, and political structure. What would replace it? The end of the Civil War, in short, posed two huge challenges that had to be solved simultaneously: how to readmit the South to the Union and how to define the status of free blacks in American society.

Between 1865 and 1877, the nation met these challenges, but not without discord and turmoil. Conflict prevailed in the halls of Congress, in the former Confederacy, and in the industrializing postwar North. The crises of Reconstruction—the restoration of the former Confederate states and the fate of the former slaves—reshaped the legacy of the Civil War.

RECONSTRUCTION POLITICS, 1865–1868

How did Radical Republicans gain control of Reconstruction politics?

The end of the Civil War offered multiple possibilities for chaos and vengeance. The federal government could have imprisoned or executed Confederate leaders, demobilized Confederate soldiers might have continued armed resistance, and freed slaves might have taken revenge on former masters. However, none of this occurred. Instead, intense *political* conflict dominated the immediate postwar period. National politics produced new constitutional amendments, a presidential impeachment, and some of the most ambitious domestic legislation ever enacted by Congress: the Reconstruction Acts of 1867–1868. It culminated in something that few expected: the enfranchisement of African-American men.

In 1865 only a handful of **Radical Republicans** advocated African-American suffrage. But in the complex political battles of Reconstruction, the Radicals won broad support for their program, including African-American male enfranchisement. Just as the Civil War had led to emancipation, Reconstruction led to African-American suffrage.

Radical Republicans Faction in Congress, led by Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, that called for full civil rights for freedmen without compromise

Lincoln's Plan

Conflict over Reconstruction began even before the war ended. In December 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, which enabled southern states to rejoin the Union if at least 10 percent of those who had voted in the 1860 elections swore an oath of allegiance to the Union and accepted emancipation. This plan excluded most Confederate officials and military officers, who would have had to apply for presidential pardons, as well as African-Americans, who had not voted in 1860. Through these requirements, Lincoln hoped both to undermine the Confederacy and to build a southern Republican Party.

Radical Republicans in Congress, however, envisioned a slower readmission process that would bar even more ex-Confederates from political life. The Wade-Davis Bill, passed by Congress in July 1864, provided that a military governor would rule each former Confederate state; after at least half the eligible voters took an oath of allegiance to the Union, delegates could be elected to a state convention that would repeal secession and abolish slavery. To qualify as a voter or a delegate, a southerner would have to take a second, “ironclad” oath, swearing that he had never voluntarily supported the Confederacy. The Wade-Davis Bill would have delayed readmission of southern states almost indefinitely.



Chronology

- 1863** Abraham Lincoln issues the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction
- 1864** Wade-Davis Bill passed by Congress and pocket-vetoed by Lincoln
- 1865** Freedmen's Bureau established; Civil War ends; Lincoln assassinated; Andrew Johnson becomes president; Johnson issues his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction; ex-Confederate states hold constitutional conventions; Thirteenth Amendment added to the Constitution
- 1866** Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act passed over Johnson's vetoes; Ku Klux Klan founded in Tennessee; race riots occur in southern cities; Republicans win congressional elections
- 1867** Reconstruction Act of 1867; William Seward negotiates the purchase of Alaska; constitutional conventions meet in the ex-Confederate states
- 1868** Andrew Johnson impeached, tried, and acquitted; Fourteenth Amendment added to the Constitution; Ulysses S. Grant elected president
- 1869** Transcontinental railroad completed
- 1870** Congress readmits the four remaining southern states to the Union; Fifteenth Amendment added to the Constitution; Enforcement Act of 1870
- 1871** Second Enforcement Act; Ku Klux Klan Act
- 1872** Liberal Republican party formed; Amnesty Act; *Alabama* claims settled; Grant reelected president
- 1873** Panic of 1873 begins, setting off five-year depression
- 1874** Democrats gain control of the House of Representatives
- 1875** Civil Rights Act of 1875; Specie Resumption Act
- 1876** Disputed presidential election: Rutherford B. Hayes versus Samuel J. Tilden
- 1877** Electoral commission decides election in favor of Hayes; the last Republican-controlled state governments fall
- 1879** “Exodus” movement spreads through several southern states

Lincoln pocket-vetoed* the Wade-Davis Bill, and an impasse followed. Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and parts of Virginia moved toward readmission under variants of Lincoln's plan, but Congress refused to seat their delegates. What Lincoln's ultimate policy would have been remains unknown. But after his assassination, on April 14, 1865, Radical Republicans turned with hope toward his successor, Andrew Johnson of Tennessee.

Andrew Johnson Former slave owner and senator from Tennessee; as Lincoln's successor and seventeenth president, he lost control over Reconstruction policy and barely survived impeachment in 1868

Presidential Reconstruction Under Johnson

At first glance, **Andrew Johnson** seemed a likely ally for the Radicals. The only southern senator to remain in Congress when his state seceded, Andrew Johnson served as military governor of Tennessee from 1862 to 1864. Defying the Confederate stand, he declared that "treason is a crime and must be made odious." Self-educated, of humble origins, a foe of the planter class, a supporter of emancipation—Johnson carried impeccable credentials. However, as a lifelong Democrat he had his own political agenda, which was sharply different from that of the Radicals. He neither adopted abolitionist ideals nor challenged racist sentiments. He hoped mainly that the fall of slavery would cripple southern aristocrats.

In May 1865, with Congress out of session, Johnson shocked Republicans by announcing his own program, A Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction, to bring back into the Union the seven southern states still without Reconstruction governments—Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. Almost all southerners who took an oath of allegiance would receive a pardon and amnesty; all their property except slaves would be restored. Oath takers could elect delegates to state conventions, which would call regular elections, proclaim secession illegal, repudiate debts incurred under the Confederacy, and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery. As under Lincoln's plan, Confederate civil and military officers would still be disqualified, as would well-off ex-Confederates (those with taxable property worth \$20,000 or more). This purge of the plantation aristocracy, Johnson said, would benefit "humble men, the peasantry of the South, who have been decoyed . . . into rebellion." Poorer whites would now be in control.

Presidential Reconstruction

Andrew Johnson's plan to pardon ex-Confederate leaders and readmit former Confederate states to the union on lenient terms

Presidential Reconstruction began in the summer of 1865, but developed unforeseen consequences. Johnson handed out pardons liberally (some thirteen thousand) and dropped his plans to punish treason. By the end of 1865 all seven states had created new civil governments that in effect restored the status quo from before the war. Confederate officers and large planters resumed state offices. Former Confederate congressmen and officials—including Alexander Stephens of Georgia, the former Confederate vice president—won election to Congress. Some states even refused to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment or to repudiate their Confederate debts.

Most infuriating to the Radicals, all seven states passed "**black codes**" intended to ensure a landless, dependent black labor force. These codes, which replaced earlier slave codes, guaranteed the freedmen some basic rights—to marry, own property, make contracts, and testify in court against other blacks—but also harshly restricted freedmen's behavior. Some states established segregation; most prohibited racial

"black codes" Laws passed by southern states to limit the rights of freedmen

* Pocket-vetoed: failed to sign the bill within ten days of Congress's adjournment.

intermarriage, jury service by blacks, and court testimony by blacks against whites. All codes included provisions that effectively barred former slaves from leaving the plantations, usually through labor contracts stipulating that anyone who had not signed a labor contract was a vagrant and subject to arrest.

As a result of the black codes, freedmen were no longer slaves but not really liberated either. In practice, many clauses in the codes never took effect: the Freedmen's Bureau suspended the enforcement of the racially discriminatory provisions of the new laws. Nonetheless, the black codes revealed white southern intentions and showed what "home rule" would have been like without federal intervention.

Many northerners denounced what they saw as southern defiance. When Congress convened in December 1865, it refused to seat delegates of ex-Confederate states and prepared to dismantle the black codes and to lock ex-Confederates out of power.

Congress Versus Johnson

Southern blacks' status became the major issue in Congress. With Congress split into four blocs—Radical, moderate, and conservative Republicans, as well as Democrats—a politically adroit president could have protected his program. Ineptly, Johnson alienated a majority of the moderates and pushed them into the Radicals' arms.

In late 1865 Congress voted to extend the life of the Freedmen's Bureau for three more years. This federal agency, headed by former Union general O. O. Howard and staffed mainly by army officers, provided relief, rations, and medical care; built schools for freed blacks; put them to work on abandoned or confiscated lands; and tried to protect their rights as laborers. To strengthen the bureau, Congress gave it new power to run special military courts, to settle labor disputes, and to invalidate labor contracts forced on freedmen by the black codes. In February 1866, Johnson vetoed the bill. The Constitution, he declared, did not sanction military trials of civilians in peacetime, nor did it support a system to care for "indigent persons." Then in March 1866 Congress passed the **Civil Rights Act of 1866**, which made African-Americans U.S. citizens with the same civil rights as other citizens and authorized federal intervention to ensure black rights in court. Johnson vetoed this measure as well, arguing that it would "operate in favor of the colored and against the white race." In April Congress overrode his veto, and in July it enacted the Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act over another presidential veto.

These vetoes puzzled many Republicans because the new laws did not undercut presidential Reconstruction. Although the vetoes gained support for Johnson among northern Democrats, they cost him dearly among moderate Republicans, who now joined Radicals to oppose him. Was Johnson a political incompetent, or was he merely trying, unsuccessfully, to forge a centrist coalition? Whatever the case, he drove moderate and Radical Republicans together toward their next step: the passage of a constitutional amendment to protect the new Civil Rights Act.

Civil Rights Act of 1866 Made blacks U.S. citizens; first major law ever passed over a presidential veto

The Fourteenth Amendment, 1866

In April 1866, Congress adopted the **Fourteenth Amendment**, its most ambitious attempt to deal with the problems of Reconstruction. In the first clause, the

Fourteenth Amendment Defined citizenship and guaranteed equal protection under the law

amendment proclaimed that all persons born or naturalized in the United States were citizens and that no state could abridge their rights without due process of law or deny them equal protection under the law. This section nullified the *Dred Scott* decision of 1857, which had declared that blacks were not citizens. Second, the amendment guaranteed that, if a state denied suffrage to any male citizen, its representation in Congress would be proportionally reduced. Third, the amendment disqualified from state and national offices *all* prewar officeholders who had supported the Confederacy. In so providing, Congress intended to invalidate most of the pardons that President Johnson had ladled out. Finally, the amendment repudiated the Confederate debt and maintained the validity of the federal debt.

The amendment's passage created a firestorm. Abolitionists decried it as a "swindle" because it did not explicitly ensure black suffrage, southerners blasted it as vengeful, and President Johnson denounced it. His defiance solidified the new alliance between moderate and Radical Republicans, and transformed the congressional elections of 1866 into a referendum on the Fourteenth Amendment.

Over the summer, Johnson set off on a whistle-stop train tour from Washington to St. Louis and Chicago and back. But this innovative campaign tactic—the "swing around the circle," as Johnson called it—failed. Humorless and defensive, the president made fresh enemies and doomed his hope of sinking the Fourteenth Amendment, which moderate and Radical Republicans defended.

Republicans carried the congressional elections of 1866 in a landslide, winning almost two-thirds of the House and four-fifths of the Senate. They had secured a mandate for the Fourteenth Amendment and their own Reconstruction program.

Congressional Reconstruction, 1866–1867

Congressional debate over reconstructing the South began in December 1866 and lasted three months. Radical leaders called for black suffrage, federal support for public schools, confiscation of Confederate estates, and extended military occupation of the South. Moderate Republicans accepted parts of this plan. In February 1867, after complex legislative maneuvers, Congress passed the Reconstruction Act of 1867. Johnson vetoed the law, and on March 2, Congress passed it over his veto. Three more Reconstruction acts—passed in 1867 and 1868 over presidential vetoes—refined and enforced the first act.

The **Reconstruction Act of 1867** invalidated the state governments formed under the Lincoln and Johnson plans. Only Tennessee, which had already ratified the Fourteenth Amendment and had been readmitted to the Union, escaped further Reconstruction. The new law divided the other ten former Confederate states into five temporary military districts, each run by a Union general (see Map 16.1). Voters—all black men, plus whites not disqualified by the Fourteenth Amendment—could elect delegates to a state convention that would write a new state constitution granting black suffrage. Once Congress approved the state constitution, and once the state legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, Congress would readmit the state into the Union. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 was far more radical than the Johnson program because it enfranchised blacks and disfranchised many ex-Confederates. Even then, however, it provided only temporary military rule, made no provisions to prosecute Confederate leaders for treason, and neither confiscated nor redistributed property.

Reconstruction Act of 1867

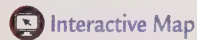
Imposed military rule on ten southern states and required them to ratify the Fourteenth Amendment



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Map 16.1 The Reconstruction of the South

The Reconstruction Act of 1867 divided the former Confederate states, except Tennessee, into five military districts and set forth the steps by which new state governments could be created.



During the congressional debates, Radical Republican congressman Thaddeus Stevens had argued for the confiscation of large Confederate estates to “humble the proud traitors” and to provide for former slaves. He had proposed subdividing such confiscated property into forty-acre tracts to be distributed among the freedmen and selling the rest to pay off war debts. Stevens’s land-reform bill won Radical support but never made progress; most Republicans held property rights sacred. Tampering with such rights, they feared, would endanger the rest of Reconstruction. Thus, land reform never came about. The “radical” Reconstruction acts were a compromise.

Congressional Reconstruction took effect in spring 1867, but Johnson impeded its enforcement by replacing pro-Radical military officers with conservative ones. Republicans seethed. More suspicious than ever, congressional moderates and Radicals again joined forces to block Johnson from further hampering Reconstruction.

The Impeachment Crisis, 1867–1868

In March 1867, Republicans in Congress passed two laws to curb presidential power. The **Tenure of Office Act** prohibited the president from removing civil officers without Senate consent. Its purpose was to bar Johnson from dismissing Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, a Radical ally. The other law barred the president from issuing military orders except through the commanding general, Ulysses S. Grant, who could not be removed without the Senate’s consent.

Tenure of Office Act Law requiring the president to seek Senate consent before removing civil officers

The Radicals' enmity toward Johnson, however, went further: They began to seek grounds on which to impeach him. The House Judiciary Committee, aided by private detectives, could at first find no valid charges against Johnson. But Johnson again rescued his foes by providing the charges they needed.

In August 1867, Johnson suspended Stanton and, in February 1868, tried to remove him. The president's defiance of the Tenure of Office Act drove moderate Republicans back into alliance with the Radicals. The House approved eleven charges of impeachment, nine based on violation of the Tenure of Office Act. The other charges accused Johnson of being "unmindful of the high duties of the office," seeking to disgrace Congress, and not enforcing the Reconstruction acts.

Johnson's trial by the Senate, which began in March 1868, riveted public attention for eleven weeks. Seven congressmen, including leading Radicals, served as prosecutors, or "managers." Johnson's lawyers maintained that he was merely seeking a court test by violating the Tenure of Office Act, which he thought was unconstitutional. They also contended that the law did not protect Stanton, because Lincoln, not Johnson, had appointed him. Finally, they asserted, Johnson was guilty of no crime indictable in a regular court.

Congressional "managers" countered that impeachment was a political process, not a criminal trial, and that Johnson's "abuse of discretionary power" constituted an impeachable offense. Some Senate Republicans wavered, fearful that the removal of a president would destroy the balance of power within the federal government. They also distrusted Radical Republican Benjamin Wade, the president pro tempore of the Senate. Because there was no vice president, Wade would become president if Johnson were thrown out.

Ultimately, despite intense pressure, seven Republicans risked political suicide by voting with the Democrats against removal, and the Senate failed by one vote to convict Johnson. In so doing, they set a precedent: Their vote discouraged impeachment on political grounds for decades to come. But the anti-Johnson forces had also achieved their goal: Andrew Johnson had no future as president. Republicans in Congress, meanwhile, pursued their last major Reconstruction objective: to guarantee black male suffrage.

The Fifteenth Amendment and the Question of Woman Suffrage, 1869–1870

Black suffrage was the linchpin of congressional Reconstruction, since only with the black vote could Republicans secure control of the ex-Confederate states. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 had forced southern states to enfranchise black men in order to reenter the Union, but

much of the North rejected black suffrage. The **Fifteenth Amendment**, proposed by Congress in 1869, sought to protect black suffrage in the South, and to enfranchise northern and border-state blacks, who would presumably vote Republican. The amendment prohibited the denial of suffrage by the states to any citizen on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Democrats opposed the amendment on the grounds that it violated states' rights, but they did not control enough states to defeat the amendment, and it was ratified in 1870 (see Table 16.1). Some southerners appreciated the amendment's omissions: as a Richmond newspaper pointed out, it had "loopholes through which

Fifteenth Amendment

Prevented states from denying the vote to any citizen on account of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude"

TABLE 16.1 THE RECONSTRUCTION AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENT AND DATE OF CONGRESSIONAL PASSAGE	PROVISIONS	RATIFICATION
Thirteenth (January 1865)	Prohibited slavery in the United States	December 1865
Fourteenth (June 1866)	<p>Defined citizenship to include all persons born or naturalized in the United States</p> <p>Provided proportional loss of congressional representation for any state that denied suffrage to any of its male citizens</p> <p>Disqualified prewar officeholders who supported the Confederacy from state or national office</p> <p>Repudiated the Confederate debt</p>	July 1868, after Congress made ratification a prerequisite for readmission of ex-Confederate states to the Union
Fifteenth (February 1869)	Prohibited the denial of suffrage because of race, color, or previous condition of servitude	March 1870; ratification required of Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, and Georgia for readmission to the Union

a coach and four horses can be driven.” For example, the Fifteenth Amendment neither guaranteed black officeholding nor prohibited voting restrictions such as property requirements and literacy tests. Such restrictions ultimately were used to deny blacks the vote.

The debate over black suffrage drew new participants into the fray. Women’s rights advocates tried to promote both black suffrage and woman suffrage, but Radical Republicans rejected any linkage between the two, preferring to concentrate on black suffrage. Supporters of women’s rights were themselves divided. Frederick Douglass argued that black suffrage had to receive priority. “If the elective franchise is not extended to the Negro, he is dead,” explained Douglass. “Woman has a thousand ways by which she can attach herself to the ruling power of the land that we have not.” But women’s rights leaders Elizabeth Cady Stanton and **Susan B. Anthony** disagreed. In their view, the Fourteenth Amendment had disabled women by including the word “male.” If the Fifteenth Amendment did not include women, they emphasized, it would increase women’s disadvantages.

The battle over black suffrage and the Fifteenth Amendment split women’s rights advocates into two rival suffrage associations, both formed in 1869. The Boston-based American Woman Suffrage Association sought state-by-state suffrage, whereas the more radical National Woman Suffrage Association, based in New York and led by Stanton and Anthony, promoted a constitutional amendment for woman suffrage.

Throughout the 1870s, the rival woman suffrage associations vied for constituents. In 1869 and 1870, independent of the suffrage movement, two territories, Wyoming and Utah, enfranchised women. But suffragists failed to sway legislators elsewhere. When Susan B. Anthony mobilized

Susan B. Anthony Women’s rights advocate whose National Woman Suffrage Association called for a federal women suffrage amendment

CHECKING IN

- Lincoln’s somewhat lenient plan for Reconstruction died with him.
- President Johnson’s even more tolerant plan for Reconstruction infuriated Radical Republicans.
- Congress overrode presidential vetoes of Reconstruction measures such as the Freedmen’s Bureau and passed its own harsher version of Reconstruction legislation.
- The Fourteenth Amendment defined citizenship and guaranteed equal protection under the law, and the Fifteenth Amendment guaranteed the right of freedmen, but not of women, to vote.
- The attempt to impeach Johnson on political grounds failed by a narrow margin.

about seventy women to try to vote nationwide in 1872, she was indicted, convicted, and fined. In 1875 the Supreme Court ruled that a state could deny women the right to vote. Divided and rebuffed, woman suffrage advocates braced for a long struggle.

By 1870, when the Fifteenth Amendment was ratified, Congress could look back on five years of achievement. Since the start of 1865, three constitutional amendments had broadened the scope of American democracy by abolishing slavery, expanding civil rights, and prohibiting the denial of suffrage on the basis of race. Congress had also readmitted the former Confederate states into the Union. But after 1868, congressional momentum slowed, and the theater of action shifted to the South, where tumultuous change occurred.

RECONSTRUCTION GOVERNMENTS

What impact did federal Reconstruction policy have on the former Confederacy and ex-Confederates?

During the unstable years of presidential Reconstruction, 1865–1867, the southern states had to create new governments, revive the war-torn economy, and face the impact of emancipation. Crises abounded. Cities and factories lay in rubble, plantation labor systems disintegrated, and racial tensions flared as freedmen organized to protest ill treatment and demand equal rights. Race riots erupted in major southern cities. In May 1866, white crowds attacked black veterans in Memphis and rampaged through black neighborhoods, killing forty-six people.

Congressional Reconstruction, supervised by federal troops, took effect in the spring of 1867. The Johnson regimes were dismantled and voters elected new state governments, which Republicans dominated. By 1868 most former Confederate states had rejoined the Union, and within two years the process was complete.

But Republican rule did not long endure in the South. Opposition from southern Democrats, the landowning elite, vigilantes, and most white voters proved insurmountable. Nevertheless, the governments formed under congressional Reconstruction were unique because black men, including former slaves, participated in them. Slavery had ended in other societies, too, but only in the United States had freedmen gained democratic political rights.

A New Electorate

The Reconstruction laws of 1867–1868 transformed the southern electorate by temporarily disfranchising 10 to 15 percent of potential white voters and by enfranchising more than 700,000 freed slaves. Black voters outnumbered whites by 100,000 overall and held voting majorities in five states.

This new electorate provided a base for the Republican Party, which had never existed in the South. To scornful Democrats, the Republicans comprised three types of scoundrels: northern “carpetbaggers” who had come south for wealth and power; southern “scalawags,” poor and ignorant whites, who sought to profit from Republican rule; and hordes of uneducated freedmen, who were easily manipulated.

Crossing class and racial lines, the hastily established Republican Party was in fact a loose coalition of diverse factions with often contradictory goals.

To northerners who moved south after the war, the former Confederacy was an undeveloped region, ripe with possibility. The carpetbaggers included many former Union soldiers who hoped to buy land, open factories, build railroads, or simply enjoy the warmer climate. Holding almost one in three state offices, they wielded disproportionate political power.

Although a handful of scalawags were old Whigs, most were small farmers from the mountain regions of North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Arkansas. As former Unionists who had owned no slaves and felt no loyalty to the landowning elite, they sought to improve their economic position and lacked commitment to black rights. Most came from regions with small black populations and cared little whether blacks voted or not. Scalawags held the most political offices during Reconstruction, but they proved the least stable element of the southern Republican coalition; eventually, many drifted back to the Democratic fold.

Freedmen, the backbone of southern Republicanism, provided eight out of ten Republican votes. They sought land, education, civil rights, and political equality, and remained loyal Republicans. Although Reconstruction governments depended on African-American votes, freedmen held at most one in five political offices and constituted a legislative majority only in South Carolina, whose population was more than 60 percent black. A mere 6 percent of southern members of the House were African-American, and almost 50 percent came from South Carolina. No blacks became governor, and only two served in the U.S. Senate—the same number as served during the twentieth century.

Black officeholders on the state level formed a political elite. They often differed from black voters in background, education, and wealth. Many were literate blacks who had been free before the Civil War. In the South Carolina legislature, most black members came from large towns and cities; many had spent time in the North; and some were well-off property owners or even former slave owners. Color differences were evident as well: 43 percent of South Carolina's black legislators were of mixed race, compared to just 7 percent of the state's black population.



The Museum of the Confederacy

Republicans in the South Carolina Legislature, ca. 1868

Only in South Carolina did blacks comprise a dominant majority in the legislature. This photographic collage of "Radical" legislators, black and white, suggests the extent of black representation. In 1874, blacks won the majority of seats in South Carolina's state senate as well.

Black officials and black voters often had different priorities. Most freedmen cared mainly about their economic future, especially about acquiring land; black officeholders cared most about attaining equal rights. Still, both groups shared high expectations and prized enfranchisement. “We’d walk fifteen miles in wartime to find out about the battle,” a Georgia freedman declared. “We can walk fifteen miles and more to find how to vote.”

Republican Rule

Large numbers of African-Americans participated in government for the first time in the state constitutional conventions of 1867–1868. The South Carolina convention had a black majority, and in Louisiana half the delegates were freedmen. These conventions forged democratic changes. Delegates abolished property qualifications for officeholding, made many appointive offices elective, and established universal manhood suffrage.

However, no state instituted land reform. When proposals for land confiscation and redistribution arose at the state conventions, they fell to defeat, as they had in Congress. Hoping to attract northern investment, southern Republicans hesitated to threaten property rights or to adopt land-reform measures that northern Republicans had rejected. South Carolina did set up a commission to buy land and make it available to freedmen, and several states changed their tax structures to force uncultivated land onto the market, but in no case was ex-Confederate land confiscated.

Once civil power shifted to the new state governments, Republican administrations began ambitious programs of public works. They built roads and bridges, approved railroad bonds, and funded institutions to care for orphans, the insane, and the disabled. They also expanded state bureaucracies and formed state militias in which blacks often were heavily represented. Finally, they created public-school systems, which were almost nonexistent in the South until then. These reforms cost millions, and taxes skyrocketed. Although northern tax rates still exceeded southern tax rates, southerners, particularly landowners, resented the new levies.

To Reconstruction’s foes, Republican rule was wasteful and corrupt, the “most stupendous system of organized robbery in history.” Indeed, corruption did permeate some state governments, as in Louisiana and South Carolina. The main profiteers were government officials who accepted bribes and railroad promoters who doled them out. But neither group was exclusively Republican. In fact, corruption increasingly characterized government *nationally* in these years and was both more flagrant and more lucrative in the North.

Counterattacks

Ex-Confederates spoke with dread about black enfranchisement and the “horror of Negro domination.” As soon as congressional Reconstruction took effect, former Confederates campaigned to undermine it. Democratic newspapers called Louisiana’s constitution “the work of ignorant Negroes cooperating with a gang of white adventurers.”

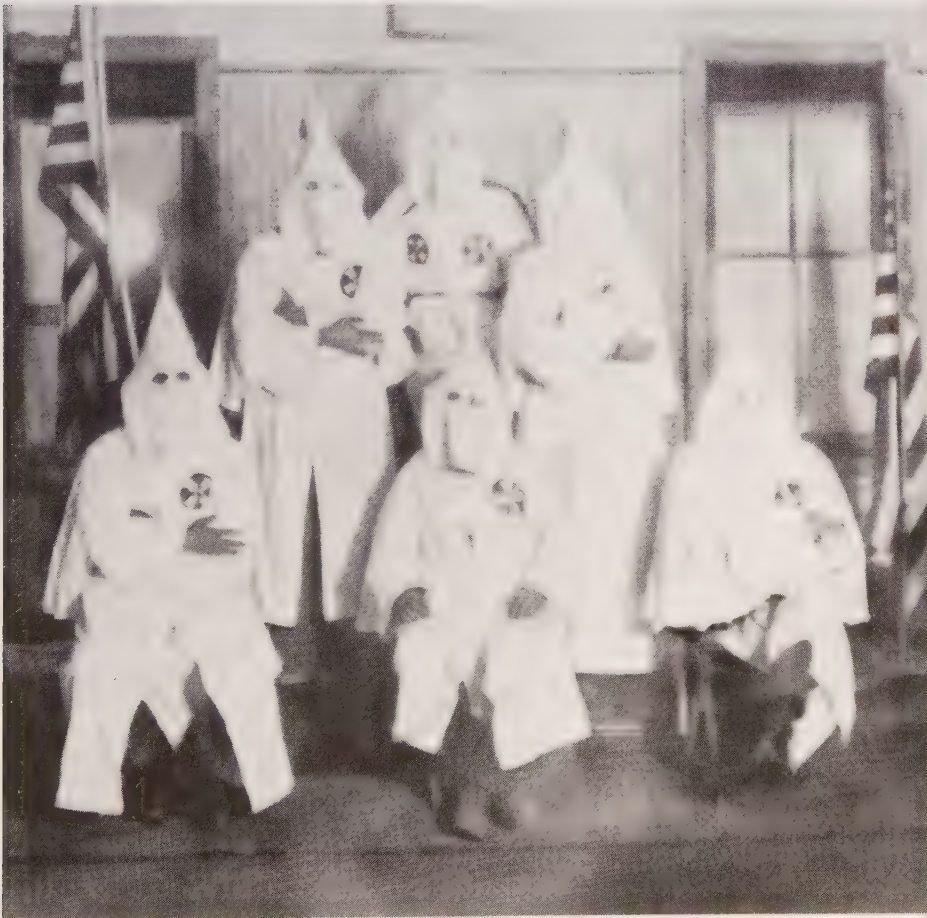
Democrats delayed mobilization until the southern states were readmitted to the Union, and then swung into action. At first, they pursued African-American

votes; however, when that failed they tried other tactics. In every southern state the Democrats contested elections, backed dissident Republican factions, elected some Democratic legislators, and lured scalawags away from the Republican Party.

Vigilante efforts to reduce black votes bolstered Democratic campaigns to win white ones. Antagonism toward free blacks, long a motif in southern life, resurged after the war. In 1865, Freedmen's Bureau agents itemized a variety of outrages against blacks, including shooting, murder, rape, arson, roasting, and "inhuman beating." Vigilante groups sprang up in all parts of the former Confederacy, but one organization rose to dominance. In the spring of 1866, six young Confederate war veterans in Tennessee formed a social club, the **Ku Klux Klan**, distinguished by elaborate rituals, hooded costumes, and secret passwords. New Klan dens spread rapidly. By the election of 1868, the Klan had become a terrorist movement directed against potential African-American voters.

The Klan sought to suppress black voting, reestablish white supremacy, and topple the Reconstruction governments. It attacked Freedmen's Bureau officials, white Republicans, black militia units, economically successful blacks, and black voters. Concentrated in areas where white and black populations were most evenly balanced and racial tensions were greatest, Klan dens adapted their tactics to local

Ku Klux Klan Organization that used terrorism to prevent freedmen from voting and to reestablish white supremacy



The Ku Klux Klan

Disguised in long white robes and hoods, Ku Klux Klansmen sometimes claimed to be the ghosts of Confederate soldiers. The Klan, which spread rapidly after 1867, sought to end Republican rule, restore white supremacy, and obliterate, in one southern editor's words, "the preposterous and wicked dogma of Negro equality."

Enforcement Acts Series of laws to protect black voters passed in 1870 and 1871; banned the Klan and similar groups

CHECKING IN

- The Republican Party, with a large bloc of freedmen, temporarily dominated the South.
- Reconstruction governments instituted such reforms as public-school systems.
- To many southern whites, such reforms seemed a costly waste of money, aggravated by government corruption.
- The Ku Klux Klan and other groups used terrorism against freedmen and their white supporters in an effort to prevent black voting and restore white supremacy.
- The federal government passed laws against such activities but left too few troops in place to protect freedmen.

conditions. In Mississippi, the Klan targeted black schools; in Alabama, it concentrated on Republican officeholders. Some Democrats denounced Klan members as “cutthroats and riff-raff.” But Klansmen included prominent ex-Confederates, among them General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the leader of the 1864 Fort Pillow massacre (see p. 354). Vigilantism united southern whites of different social classes; in areas where the Klan was inactive, other vigilante groups took its place.

Republican legislatures passed laws to outlaw vigilantism. However, when state militias could not enforce the laws, state officials turned to the federal government for help. Between May 1870 and February 1871 Congress passed three **Enforcement Acts**, each progressively more stringent. The First Enforcement Act protected black voters. The Second Enforcement Act provided for federal supervision of southern elections, and the Third Enforcement Act, or Ku Klux Klan Act, authorized the use of federal troops and the suspension of *habeas corpus* (HAY-bee-us KORP-us), the requirement that cause for detaining a prisoner be shown in court. Although thousands were arrested under the Enforcement Acts, most terrorists escaped conviction.

By 1872 the federal government had effectively suppressed the Klan, but vigilantism had served its purpose. A large military presence in the South could have protected black rights, but instead federal troop levels fell steadily. Congress allowed the Freedmen’s Bureau to die in 1869; the Enforcement Acts thus became dead letters. The battle over Reconstruction was in essence a battle over the implications of emancipation, and it had begun as soon as the war ended.

THE IMPACT OF EMANCIPATION

How did the newly freed slaves reshape their lives after emancipation?

“The master he says we are all free,” a South Carolina slave declared in 1865. “But it don’t mean we is white. And it don’t mean we is equal.” Yet despite the daunting handicaps they faced—illiteracy, lack of property, meager skills—most former slaves found the exhilaration of freedom overwhelming. Emancipation gave them the right to their own labor and a new sense of autonomy. Under Reconstruction, they sought to cast off white control and shed the vestiges of slavery.

Confronting Freedom

For former slaves, liberty meant mobility. Some moved out of the slave quarters; others fled the plantation completely. “The moment they see an opportunity to improve themselves, they will move on,” diarist Mary Chesnut observed.

Emancipation stirred waves of migration within the former Confederacy. Some slaves headed to the Deep South, where desperate planters paid higher wages for labor, but more moved to towns and cities. Urban black populations doubled or tripled after emancipation. The desire to find lost family members prompted much of the movement. Parents sought children who had been sold; husbands and wives

who had been separated reunited; and families reclaimed youngsters from masters' homes. The Freedmen's Bureau helped former slaves to get information about missing relatives and to travel to find them. Bureau agents also tried to resolve conflicts that arose when spouses who had been separated under slavery married other people.

However, reunification efforts often failed. Some fugitive slaves had died during the war or were untraceable. Still, success stories abounded. Once reunited, freed blacks quickly legalized unions formed under slavery, sometimes in mass ceremonies of up to seventy couples. Legal marriage had a tangible impact on family life. Men asserted themselves as household heads; wives of able-bodied men often withdrew from the work force to care for homes and families. "When I married my wife, I married her to wait on me and she has got all she can do right here for me and the children," a Tennessee freedman explained.

Severe labor shortages followed immediately after the war because women had made up half of all field workers. Still, by Reconstruction's end, many black women had returned to agricultural work as part of sharecropper families. Others took work in cities as laundresses, cooks, and domestic servants. (White women often sought employment as well, for the war had reduced the supply of future husbands and left families destitute.) However, former slaves continued to view stable, independent domestic life, especially the right to rear their own children, as a major blessing of freedom.

African-American Institutions

The freed blacks' desire for independence also led to the growth of black churches. The African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded by Philadelphia blacks in the 1790s, gained thousands of new southern members. Negro Baptist churches, their roots often in plantation "praise meetings" organized by slaves, sprouted everywhere.

Black churches offered a fervent, participatory experience. They also provided relief, raised funds for schools, and supported Republican policies. Black ministers assumed leading political roles until Reconstruction's end and then remained the main pillars of authority within African-American communities.

Schools, too, played a crucial role for freedmen as the ex-slaves sought literacy for themselves and, above all, for their children. At emancipation, blacks organized their own schools, which the Freedmen's Bureau soon supervised. Northern philanthropic societies paid the wages of instructors, about half of them women. In 1869, the bureau reported more than four thousand black schools were established in the former Confederacy. Within three years, each southern state had a public-school system, at least in principle, generally with separate schools for blacks and whites. The Freedmen's Bureau helped to establish Howard, Atlanta, and Fisk universities (1866–1867) and Hampton Institute (1868).

However, black education remained limited. Few rural blacks could reach the freedmen's schools located in towns. Underfunded black public schools held classes only for short seasons and sometimes drew vigilante attacks. At the end of Reconstruction, more than 80 percent of the black population was still illiterate, though literacy rose steadily among youngsters.



Archival and Museum Collection/Hampton University

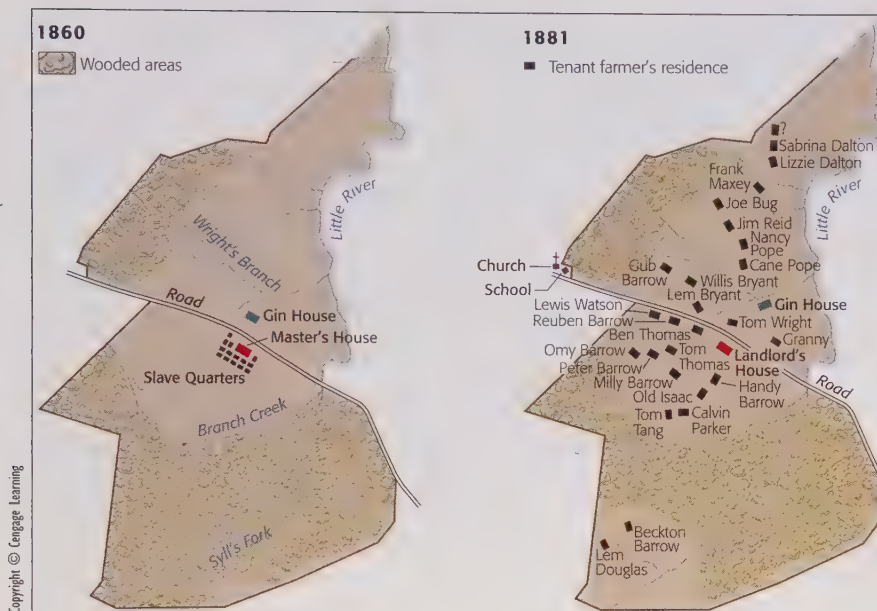
Hampton Institute

Founded in 1868, Hampton Institute in southeastern Virginia welcomed newly freed African-Americans to vocational programs in agriculture, teacher training, and homemaking. These students, photographed at the school's entrance around 1870, were among Hampton's first classes.

Civil Rights Act of 1875 Called for the desegregation of transportation facilities, juries, and public accommodations; invalidated by the Supreme Court in 1883

School segregation and other forms of racial separation were taken for granted. Even after the invalidation of the black codes, segregation continued on streetcars, steamboats, and trains as well as in churches, theaters, and restaurants. In honor of the late Republican senator Charles Sumner, Congress passed the **Civil Rights Act of 1875**, banning segregation except in schools. But in the 1883 *Civil Rights Cases*, the Supreme Court threw the law out. The Fourteenth Amendment did not prohibit discrimination by individuals, the Court ruled, only that perpetrated by the state.

White southerners rejected the prospect of racial integration, which they insisted would lead to racial amalgamation. “If we have social equality, we shall have intermarriage,” one white southerner contended, “and if we have intermarriage, we shall degenerate.” Urban blacks sometimes challenged segregation practices, but most freed blacks were less interested in “social equality” than in black liberty and community. Moreover, the new postwar elite—teachers, ministers, and politicians—served



Map 16.2 The Barrow Plantation, 1860 and 1881

The transformation of the Barrow plantation in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, illustrates the striking changes in southern agriculture during Reconstruction. After the war, the former slaves signed labor contracts with owner David Crenshaw Barrow and worked in squads under a hired foreman. But the freedman disliked the arrangement. By 1881, the old plantation had been subdivided into tenant farms of around thirty acres each. One out of four families was named Barrow.

[Interactive Map](#)

black constituencies and thus had a vested interest in separate black institutions. Rural blacks, too, widely preferred all-black institutions, as they had little desire to mix with whites. In fact, they sought freedom from white control. Above all, they wanted to secure personal independence by acquiring land.

Land, Labor, and Sharecropping

“The sole ambition of the freedman,” a New Englander wrote from South Carolina in 1865, “appears to be to become the owner of a little piece of land, there to erect a humble home, and to dwell in peace and security, at his own free will and pleasure.” Indeed, to freed blacks everywhere, “forty acres and a mule” (a phrase that originated during the war as General William T. Sherman set aside land on the South Carolina Sea Islands for black settlement) promised emancipation from plantation labor, white domination, and cotton, the “slave crop.”

However, the freedmen’s visions of landownership failed to materialize, for, as we have seen, large-scale land reform never occurred. Some freedmen obtained land with the help of the Freedmen’s Bureau or sometimes by pooling resources (see Map 16.2). In 1866, Congress passed the Southern Homestead Act, which set aside 44 million acres of public land in five southern states for freedmen and loyal whites. About four thousand blacks resettled on homesteads under the law. But the soil was poor and few former slaves had the resources to survive until their first harvest (poor whites fared little better). By Reconstruction’s end, only a small minority of former slaves owned working farms. In Georgia in 1876, for example, blacks controlled a mere 1.3 percent of total acreage. Without large-scale land reform, obstacles to black landownership remained overwhelming.

What were these obstacles? First, freedmen lacked capital to buy land or tools. Furthermore, white southerners generally opposed selling land to blacks. Most

important, planters sought to preserve a black labor force and took steps to ensure that black labor would remain available on the plantations.

During presidential Reconstruction, southern state legislatures tried to curb black mobility and preserve a captive labor force through the black codes. Under labor contracts in effect in 1865–1866, freedmen received wages, housing, food, and clothing in exchange for field work. With cash scarce, wages usually took the form of a very small share of the crop, often one-eighth or less, divided among the entire plantation work force. Freedmen's Bureau agents promoted the new labor system, seeing wage labor as a step toward economic independence. "You must begin at the bottom of the ladder and climb up," Freedmen's Bureau head O. O. Howard exhorted a group of Louisiana freedmen in 1865.

Problems arose immediately. Freedmen disliked the new wage system, especially the use of gang labor, which resembled the work pattern under slavery. Moreover, postwar planters had to compete for labor even as many scorned African-American workers as lazy or inefficient. One landowner estimated that workers accomplished only "two-fifths of what they did under the old system." As productivity fell, so did land values. Plummeting cotton prices and poor harvests compounded planters' woes. By 1867, an agricultural impasse had been reached: Landowners lacked labor, and freedmen lacked land.

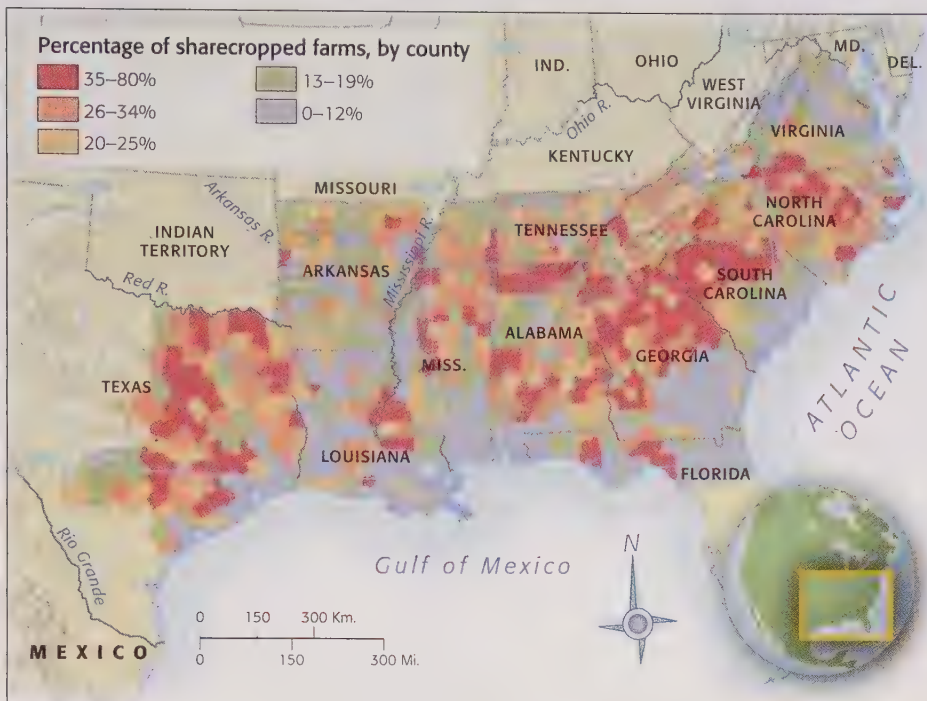
Southerners began experimenting with new labor schemes, including the division of plantations into small tenancies. **Sharecropping**, the most widespread arrangement, evolved as a compromise. Under this system, landowners subdivided large plantations into farms of thirty to fifty acres, which they rented to freedmen under annual leases for a share of the crop, usually half. Freedmen preferred sharecropping to wage labor because it represented a step toward independence. Planters, meanwhile, retained control of their land. The most productive land thus remained in the hands of a small group of owners; in effect, sharecropping helped to preserve the planter elite.

Although the wage system continued on sugar and rice plantations, by 1870 the plantation tradition had yielded to sharecropping in the Cotton South (see Map 16.3). A severe depression in 1873 drove many blacks and independent white farmers into sharecropping. By 1880, 80 percent of the land in the cotton-producing states had been subdivided into tenancies, most of it farmed by sharecroppers, both white and black. In fact, white sharecroppers outnumbered black, although a higher proportion of southern blacks, about 75 percent, were involved in the system. Changes in marketing and finance, meanwhile, made the sharecroppers' lot increasingly precarious.

sharecropping System in which a tenant farmer paid a share of the crop as rent to the landowner

Toward a Crop-Lien Economy

The postwar South's hundreds of thousands of tenant farmers and sharecroppers needed a local credit system to see them through the growing season until they could harvest their crops. Rural merchants advanced supplies to tenants and sharecroppers on credit and sold their crops to wholesalers. Because renters had no property to use as collateral, merchants secured their loans with a lien (*leen*), or claim, on each farmer's next crop. Exorbitant interest rates of 50 percent or more quickly forced many tenants and sharecroppers into a cycle of indebtedness. The sharecropper



might well owe part of his crop to the landowner and another part (the rest of his crop, or more) to the merchant. Illiterate tenants who lost track of their financial arrangements often fell prey to unscrupulous merchants. Once a tenant's real or alleged debts exceeded the value of his crop, he was tied to the land, to cotton, and to sharecropping.

By Reconstruction's end, sharecropping and crop liens had bound the South to staple crops, such as cotton, and prevented crop diversification. Plunging prices, soil depletion, land erosion, and outmoded equipment soon locked much of the South into a cycle of poverty. Trapped in perpetual debt, tenant farmers became the chief victims of the new agricultural order. Cotton remained the only survival route open to poor farmers, regardless of race, but low income from cotton locked them into sharecropping and crop liens. African-American tenants saw their political rights dwindle as rapidly as their hopes for economic freedom. When Reconstruction ended, neither state governments nor the national government offered them protection, for northern politicians were preoccupied with their own problems.

Checking In

- Tens of thousands of freedmen sought missing family members, and former slaves hastened to legalize the marriages they had made under slavery.
- Blacks formed their own communities, churches, and schools as segregation became firmly established in the South.
- Few former slaves achieved land ownership, and sharecropping became the dominant form of agricultural labor for blacks and many poor whites.
- Without economic status, blacks quickly saw their political rights erode.

NEW CONCERNS IN THE NORTH, 1868–1876

Why did northern concern about Reconstruction begin to wane?

The nomination of Ulysses S. Grant for president in 1868 launched a chaotic era in national politics. Grant's two terms in office saw political scandals, a party revolt, a massive depression, and a steady retreat from Reconstruction. By the mid-1870s,

northern voters cared more about unemployment, labor unrest, and currency problems than about the “southern question.” Responsive to the shift in popular mood, Republicans turned their backs on the freedmen.

Grantism

Republicans had good reason to nominate General Grant. A war hero, he was endorsed by veterans and admired throughout the North. To oppose Grant, the Democrats nominated New York Governor Horatio Seymour, arch-critic of the Lincoln administration in wartime and now a foe of Reconstruction. Grant ran on personal popularity more than issues. Although he carried all but eight states, the popular vote was close; in the South, newly enfranchised freedmen provided Grant’s margin of victory.

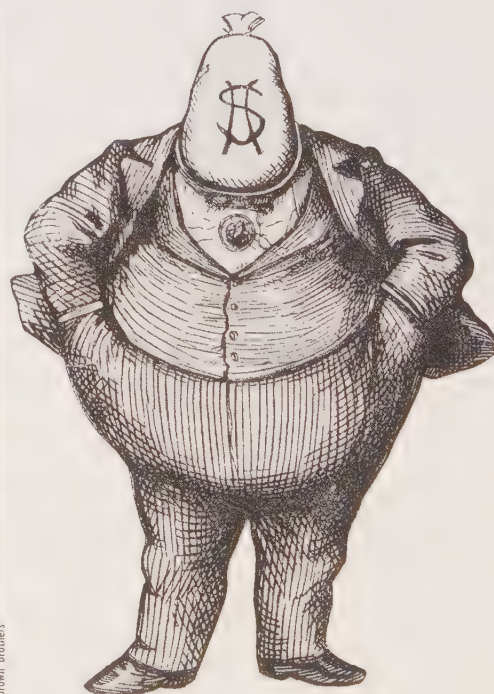
A strong leader in war, Grant proved to be a passive president with little political skill. Many of his cabinet appointees were mediocre if not unscrupulous; scandals plagued his administration. In 1869 financier Jay Gould and his partner Jim Fisk tried to corner the gold market with the help of Grant’s brother-in-law. When gold prices tumbled, investors were ruined and Grant’s reputation suffered. Near the end of Grant’s first term, his vice president, Schuyler Colfax, got caught up in the *Crédit Mobilier* (CRAY-dee MOH-bill-yay) scandal, a fraudulent scheme to skim off the profits of the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1875, Grant’s personal secretary, Orville Babcock, was found guilty of accepting bribes from the “whiskey ring,” distillers who bribed federal agents to avoid paying millions in taxes. And in 1876, voters learned that Grant’s secretary of war, William E. Belknap, had taken bribes to sell lucrative Indian trading posts in Oklahoma.

Boss Tweed

Thomas Nast’s cartoons in *Harper’s Weekly* helped topple New York Democratic boss William M. Tweed, who, with his associates, embodied corruption on a large scale. The Tweed Ring had granted lucrative franchises to companies they controlled, padded construction bills, practiced graft and extortion, and exploited every opportunity to plunder the city’s funds.



Brown Brothers



Harper's Weekly, 1871

Although uninvolved in the scandals, Grant defended his subordinates. To his critics, “Grantism” came to stand for fraud, bribery, and political corruption—evils that spread far beyond Washington. The New York City press revealed in 1872 that Democratic boss William M. Tweed, the leader of Tammany Hall, led a ring that had looted the city treasury and collected millions in kickbacks and payoffs. When Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner published their satiric novel *The Gilded Age* in 1873, readers recognized the book’s speculators, self-promoters, and opportunists as familiar figures in public life. (The term “Gilded Age” has subsequently been used to refer to the decades from the 1870s to the 1890s.)

Grant did enjoy some foreign-policy successes. In 1872, his administration engineered the settlement of the *Alabama* claims with Britain. To compensate for damage done by Confederate-owned but British-built ships, an international tribunal awarded the United States \$15.5 million. But Grant’s administration faltered when it tried to add non-adjacent territory to the United States. In 1867, Johnson’s secretary of state, William H. Seward, had negotiated a treaty to buy Alaska from Russia at the bargain price of \$7.2 million. The purchase had rekindled expansionists’ hopes, and in 1870, Grant decided to annex the eastern half of the Caribbean island of Santo Domingo (today called the Dominican Republic). Annexation, Grant believed, would promote Caribbean trade and provide a haven for persecuted southern blacks. Despite speculators’ hopes for windfall profits, the Senate rejected the annexation treaty and further diminished Grant’s reputation.

As the election of 1872 approached, dissident Republicans feared that “Grantism” would ruin the party. Former Radicals and other Republicans left out of Grant’s “Great Barbecue” formed their own party, the **Liberal Republicans**.

Liberal Republicans Dissident political faction that opposed Grant and called for civil service reform and an end to congressional Reconstruction in the South

The Liberals’ Revolt

The Liberal Republican revolt split the party and undermined Reconstruction. (The label “liberal” at the time meant support for economic doctrines such as free trade, the gold standard, and the law of supply and demand.) Liberals demanded civil service reform to bring the “best men” into government. They demanded an end to “bayonet rule” in the South and argued that blacks, now enfranchised, could fend for themselves. Corruption in government posed a greater threat than Confederate resurgence, the Liberals claimed, and they demanded that the “best men” in the South, ex-Confederates barred from holding office, be returned to government.

For president, the new party nominated *New York Tribune* editor Horace Greeley, who had inconsistently supported both a stringent Reconstruction policy and leniency toward former rebels. The Democrats endorsed Greeley as well; their campaign slogan was “Anything to Beat Grant.” Horace Greeley campaigned so diligently that he worked himself to death making speeches from the back of a train, and died a few weeks after the election.

Grant carried 56 percent of the popular vote and won the electoral vote handily. But division among Republicans affected Reconstruction. To deprive the Liberals of a campaign issue, Grant Republicans in Congress passed the Amnesty Act, which allowed all but a few hundred ex-Confederate officials to hold office. In Grant’s second term, Republican desires to discard the “southern question” mounted as depression gripped the nation.

The Panic of 1873

The postwar years brought accelerated industrialization, rapid economic growth, and frantic speculation as investors rushed to take advantage of seemingly boundless opportunities. Railroads led the speculative boom. The transcontinental line reached completion in 1869 (see Chapter 17). By 1873, almost four hundred railroads crisscrossed the Northeast. In addition to transforming the economy, the railroad boom led entrepreneurs to overspeculate, with drastic results.

In 1869 Philadelphia banker Jay Cooke took over a new transcontinental line, the Northern Pacific. Northern Pacific securities sold briskly for several years, but in 1873 construction costs outran bond sales. In September, Cooke defaulted on his obligations, and his bank, the largest in the nation, shut down. A financial panic began; other firms collapsed, as did the stock market. The Panic of 1873 plunged the nation into a five-year depression. Within two years, eighteen thousand businesses went bankrupt; 3 million people were unemployed by 1878. Wage cuts struck those still employed; labor protests mounted; and industrial violence spread. The depression of the 1870s revealed that conflicts born of industrialization had replaced sectional divisions.

The depression also fed a dispute over currency that had begun in 1865. During the Civil War, Americans had used greenbacks, a paper currency not backed by a specific weight in gold. “Sound money” supporters demanded the withdrawal of greenbacks from circulation as a means of stabilizing the currency. Their opponents, such as farmers and manufacturers dependent on easy credit who were known as “easy money” advocates, wanted to expand the currency by issuing additional greenbacks. The deepening depression created even more demand for easy money. The issue divided both major parties and was compounded by another one: how to repay the federal debt.

In wartime, the Union government had borrowed astronomical sums through the sale of war bonds. Bondholders wanted repayment in “coin,” gold or silver, even though many of them had paid for the bonds in greenbacks. The Public Credit Act of 1869 promised payment in coin. Senator John Sherman, the author of the Public Credit Act, guided legislation through Congress that defined “coin” as gold only and swapped old short-term bonds for new ones payable over the next generation. Sherman’s Specie Resumption Act of 1875 promised to put the nation back on the gold standard by 1879. His measures preserved the public credit, the currency, and Republican unity.

However, Sherman’s measures did not satisfy the Democrats, who gained control of the House in 1875. Many Democrats and some Republicans demanded the restoration of the silver dollar in order to expand the currency and relieve the depression. The Bland-Allison Act of 1878 partially restored silver coinage by requiring the government to buy and coin several million dollars’ worth of silver each month. In 1876, other expansionists formed the **Greenback Party**, which adopted the debtors’ cause and fought to keep greenbacks in circulation, though with little success. As the depression receded in 1879, the clamor for “easy money” subsided, only to return in the 1890s (see Chapter 20). The controversial, but unresolved, “money question” of the 1870s gave politicians and voters another reason to forget about the South.

Greenback Party “Easy money” advocates who favored continued issuance of greenbacks and the free coinage of silver

Reconstruction and the Constitution

The Supreme Court of the 1870s also played a role in weakening northern support for Reconstruction as new constitutional questions surfaced. First, would the Court support laws to protect freedmen's rights? The decision in *Ex Parte Milligan* (1866) had suggested not. In *Milligan*, the Court had ruled that a military commission could not try civilians in areas where civilian courts were functioning. Thus, special military courts to enforce the Supplementary Freedmen's Bureau Act were doomed. Second, would the Court sabotage the congressional Reconstruction plan, as Republicans feared? In *Texas v. White* (1869), the Court had let Reconstruction stand, ruling that Congress had the power to ensure each state a republican form of government.

However, in the 1870s, the Court backed away from Reconstruction. In the *Slaughterhouse* case of 1873, the Court considered whether Louisiana had violated the constitutional rights of butchers excluded from a slaughterhouse monopoly established by the state in 1869. In ruling against the butchers, the Court ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment protected only the rights of *national* citizenship, such as the right to interstate travel, but not those rights that fell to citizens through *state* citizenship. The *Slaughterhouse* decision vitiated the intent of the Fourteenth Amendment—to secure freedmen's rights against state encroachment.

The Supreme Court again backed away from Reconstruction in two cases in 1876 involving the Enforcement Act of 1870, which were enacted to protect black suffrage. In *United States v. Reese* and *United States v. Cruikshank*, the Supreme Court undercut the act's effectiveness. Continuing its retreat from Reconstruction, the Supreme Court in 1883 invalidated both the Civil Rights Act of 1875 and the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871. These decisions cumulatively dismantled the Reconstruction policies that Republicans had sponsored after the war and confirmed rising northern sentiment that Reconstruction's egalitarian goals could not be enforced.

Republicans in Retreat

The Republicans gradually disengaged from Reconstruction, beginning with the election of Grant as president in 1868. Grant believed in decentralized government and hesitated to assert federal authority in local and state affairs.

In the 1870s, Republican idealism waned. The Liberal Republican revolt of 1872 eroded what remained of radicalism. Commercial and industrial interests now dominated both wings of the party, and few Republicans wished to rekindle sectional strife. After the Democrats won the House in 1874, support for Reconstruction became a political liability.

By 1875, the Radical Republicans, so prominent in the 1860s, had vanished. Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner were dead. Other Radicals had lost office or conviction. Republican leaders reported that voters were "sick of carpetbag government" and tiring of both the "southern question" and the "Negro question." It seemed pointless to continue the unpopular and expensive policy of military intervention in the South. Finally, Republican leaders and voters generally agreed that blacks, although worthy of freedom, were inferior to whites. The Republicans' retreat from Reconstruction set the stage for its demise in 1877.

CHECKING IN

- Grant's administration was riddled by corruption, mirroring politics in much of the country.
- The Panic of 1873 devastated the northern economy, plunging the nation into a deep depression.
- Through the 1870s the Supreme Court struck down basic legislation protecting freedmen's rights.
- Most Radical Republican leaders had died by the early 1870s, and commercial and industrial interests began to dominate the Republican Party.

RECONSTRUCTION ABANDONED, 1876–1877

What factors contributed to the end of Reconstruction in 1877?

“We are in a very hot political contest just now,” a Mississippi planter wrote his daughter in 1875, “with a good prospect of turning out the carpetbag thieves by whom we have been robbed for the past six to ten years.” Similar contests raged through the South in the 1870s, as the white resentment grew and Democratic influence surged. By 1876 Republican rule survived in only three southern states—South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana. Democratic victories in state elections that year and political bargaining in Washington in 1877 ended what little remained of Reconstruction.

“Redeeming” the South

Republican collapse in the South accelerated after 1872. Congressional amnesty enabled virtually all ex-Confederate officials to regain office; divisions among the Republicans weakened their party’s grip on the southern electorate; and attrition diminished Republican ranks. Carpetbaggers returned north or became Democrats. Scalawags deserted in even larger numbers. Tired of northern interference and seeing the possibility of “home rule,” scalawags concluded that staying Republican meant going down with a sinking ship. Unable to win new white votes or retain the old ones, the fragile Republican coalition crumbled.

Meanwhile, Democrats mobilized once-apatetic white voters. The resurrected southern Democratic Party was divided. Businessmen who envisioned an industrialized “New South” opposed an agrarian faction called the Bourbons—the old planter elite. But Democrats shared one goal: to oust Republicans from office (see Table 16.2).

TABLE 16.2 THE DURATION OF REPUBLICAN RULE IN THE EX-CONFEDERATE STATES

FORMER CONFEDERATE STATES	READMISSION TO THE UNION UNDER CONGRESSIONAL RECONSTRUCTION	DEMOCRATS (CONSERVATIVES) GAIN CONTROL	DURATION OF REPUBLICAN RULE
Alabama	June 25, 1868	November 14, 1874	6½ years
Arkansas	June 22, 1868	November 10, 1874	6½ years
Florida	June 25, 1868	January 2, 1877	8½ years
Georgia	July 15, 1870	November 1, 1871	1 year
Louisiana	June 25, 1868	January 2, 1877	8½ years
Mississippi	February 23, 1870	November 3, 1875	5½ years
North Carolina	June 25, 1868	November 3, 1870	2 years
South Carolina	June 25, 1868	November 12, 1876	8 years
Tennessee	July 24, 1866*	October 4, 1869	3 years
Texas	March 30, 1870	January 14, 1873	3 years
Virginia	January 26, 1870	October 5, 1869†	0 years

Source: Reprinted by permission from John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction After the Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 231.

*Admitted before the start of congressional Reconstruction.

†Democrats gained control before readmission.

Tactics varied by state. In several Deep South states Democrats resorted to violence. In Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1874, rampaging whites slaughtered about three hundred blacks and terrorized thousands of potential voters. The “Mississippi plan” took effect in 1875; local Democratic clubs armed their members, who broke up Republican meetings, patrolled voter-registration locations, and marched through black areas. “The Republicans are paralyzed through fear and will not act,” the anguished carpet-bag governor of Mississippi wrote to his wife. “Why should I fight a hopeless battle?” In 1876, South Carolina’s “Rifle Clubs” and “Red Shirts,” armed groups that threatened Republicans, continued the scare tactics that had worked so well in Mississippi.

Terrorism did not completely squelch black voting, but it did deprive Republicans of enough black votes to win state elections. Throughout the South, economic pressures reinforced intimidation; labor contracts included clauses barring attendance at political meetings, and planters used eviction threats to keep sharecroppers in line. Together, intimidation and economic pressure succeeded.

“Redemption,” the word that Democrats used to describe their return to power, brought sweeping changes. States rewrote constitutions, cut expenses, lowered taxes, eliminated social programs, limited the rights of tenants and sharecroppers, and shaped laws to ensure a stable black labor force. Legislatures restored vagrancy laws, strengthened crop-lien statutes, and rewrote criminal law. Local ordinances in heavily black counties often restricted hunting, fishing, gun carrying, and even dog ownership, drastically curtailing the ability of freedmen to live off the land. States passed severe laws against trespassing and theft; for example, stealing livestock or wrongly taking part of a crop became grand larceny with a penalty of up to five years at hard labor. By Reconstruction’s end, black convict labor was commonplace.

For the freedmen, whose aspirations rose under Republican rule, redemption was devastating. The new laws, Tennessee blacks contended at an 1875 convention, would impose “a condition of servitude scarcely less degrading than that endured before the late civil war.” In the late 1870s, as the political climate grew more oppressive, an “exodus” movement spread through the Deep South. Nearly fifteen thousand “**exodusters**” from the Deep South moved to Kansas and set up homesteads. But scarce resources left most of the freed slaves stranded. Mass movement of southern blacks to the North and Midwest would not gain momentum until the twentieth century.

“exodusters” Thousands of blacks who left the Deep South for homesteads in Kansas in the 1870s

The Election of 1876

By the autumn of 1876, with redemption almost complete, both parties moved to discard the animosity left by the war and Reconstruction. Republicans nominated Rutherford B. Hayes, three times Ohio’s governor, for president. Untainted by the Grant-era scandals and popular with all factions in his party, Hayes presented himself as a “moderate” on southern policy. He favored “home rule” in the South and a guarantee of civil and political rights for all—two contradictory goals. The Democrats nominated Governor Samuel J. Tilden of New York, a political reformer known for his assaults on the Tweed Ring that had plundered New York City’s treasury. Both candidates favored sound money, endorsed civil service reform, and decried corruption.

Tilden won the popular vote by a 3 percent margin and seemed destined to capture the 185 electoral votes needed for victory. But the Republicans challenged pro-Tilden returns from South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana, and the Democrats challenged (on a technicality) one electoral vote from Oregon. Southern Republicans

managed to throw out enough Democratic ballots in the contested states to proclaim Hayes the winner.

The nation now faced an unprecedented dilemma. Each party claimed victory, and each accused the other of fraud. In fact, both sets of southern votes were fraudulent: Republicans had discarded legitimate Democratic ballots, and Democrats had illegally prevented freedmen from voting. In January 1877, Congress created a special electoral commission—seven Democrats, seven Republicans, and one independent—to resolve the conflict. When the independent resigned, Congress replaced him with a Republican, and the commission gave Hayes the election by a vote of 8 to 7.

Congress now had to certify the new electoral vote. However, Democrats controlled the House, and some threatened to delay approval of the electoral vote. For many southern Democrats, regaining control of their states was far more important than preventing the election of a Republican president—if the new Republican administration would leave the South alone. Republican leaders, although sure of eventual triumph, were willing to bargain as well, for candidate Hayes desired not merely victory but southern approval. Informal negotiations followed, with both parties exchanging promises. Ohio Republicans and southern Democrats agreed that if Hayes won the election, he would remove federal troops from South Carolina and Louisiana, and Democrats could gain control of those states. Other negotiations led to the understanding that southerners would receive federal patronage, federal aid to railroads, and federal support for internal improvements. In turn, southerners promised to accept Hayes as president and to treat the freedmen fairly.

Congress thus ratified Hayes's election. Once in office, Hayes fulfilled some of the promises his Republican colleagues had made. He appointed a former Confederate as postmaster general and ordered federal troops who guarded the South Carolina and Louisiana statehouses back to their barracks. Republican rule toppled in Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida. But some of the bargains struck in the **Compromise of 1877**, such as Democratic promises to treat southern blacks fairly, were forgotten, as were Hayes's pledges to ensure freedmen's rights. "When you turned us loose, you turned us loose to the sky, to the storm, to the whirlwind, and worst of all . . . to the wrath of our infuriated masters," Frederick Douglass charged at the 1876 Republican convention. "The question now is, do you mean to make good to us the promises in your Constitution?" By 1877 the answer was clear: "No."

Compromise of 1877 Deal that gave Republicans the presidency and restored Democrats to power in the South, ending Reconstruction

CHECKING IN

- The Republican collapse in the South accelerated after 1872.
- Democrats regained control of southern states.
- "Redeemers" ended reforms and limited or eliminated black rights.
- The election of 1876 resulted in challenges to some electoral votes and charges of fraud on both sides.
- The price of Republican victory in the election was the end of Reconstruction and the virtual abandonment of the freedmen.

Chapter Summary

How did Radical Republicans gain control of Reconstruction politics? (page 370)

Radical Republicans saw Johnson as too lenient on Reconstruction and passed a stringent congressional Reconstruction program over his veto. They even attempted to impeach the president for political reasons, but failed. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, which Johnson opposed, were major triumphs for the Radicals.

KEY TERMS

Radical Republicans (p. 370)
 Andrew Johnson (p. 372)
 Presidential Reconstruction (p. 372)

What impact did federal Reconstruction policy have on the former Confederacy and ex-Confederates? (page 378)

Democrats and ex-Confederates were largely excluded from political power in the South, which fell to Republicans and freedmen. The Reconstruction governments passed costly reform measures, most of which were later abandoned or scaled back. Terrorist organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan flourished briefly. They were outlawed by the federal government but had already intimidated freedmen.

How did the newly freed slaves reshape their lives after emancipation? (page 382)

Former slaves sought missing family members, legalized marriages made under slavery, and created schools and churches in large numbers. However, without land reform most remained poor and ultimately were caught in the pernicious sharecropping system; their rights were soon eroded.

Why did northern concern about Reconstruction begin to wane? (page 387)

Other concerns soon began to preoccupy Republicans. Corruption, epitomized by the Grant administration, permeated the nation. The Panic of 1873 led to a major depression. The Supreme Court threw out important measures intended to protect freedmen's rights. Finally, with most Radical Republican leaders gone by the early 1870s, commercial and industrial interests began to dominate the Republican Party.

What factors contributed to the end of Reconstruction in 1877? (page 392)

Republican control of the South began to collapse in the early 1870s. As Democrats "redeemed" southern states, they curtailed reforms and eliminated black rights. The price of the Republican victory in the disputed presidential election of 1876 was the end of Reconstruction and the return of the South to Democratic control.

KEY TERMS continued

"black codes" (p. 372)
 Civil Rights Act of 1866 (p. 373)
 Fourteenth Amendment (p. 373)
 Reconstruction Act of 1867 (p. 374)
 Tenure of Office Act (p. 375)
 Fifteenth Amendment (p. 376)
 Susan B. Anthony (p. 377)
 Ku Klux Klan (p. 381)
 Enforcement Acts (p. 382)
 Civil Rights Act of 1875 (p. 384)
 sharecropping (p. 386)
 Liberal Republicans (p. 389)
 Greenback Party (p. 390)
 "exodusters" (p. 393)
 Compromise of 1877 (p. 394)



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The Transformation of the Trans-Mississippi West

CHAPTER 17

1860–1900

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Native Americans and the Trans-Mississippi West

How was Indian life on the Great Plains transformed in the second half of the nineteenth century?

Settling the West

What roles did the federal government, the army, and the railroads play in the settlement of the West?

Southwestern Borderlands

How did ranchers and settlers displace Spanish-speaking Americans in the Southwest?

Exploiting the Western Landscape

How did mining, ranching, and farming shape the West?

The West of Life and Legend

How was the Wild West image of cowboys and Indians created, and what developments prompted the establishment of national parks?



Glennsey Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Fire Canoe at Fort Berthold, by William de la Montagne Cary

"The buffaloes and the black-tail deer are gone, and our Indian ways are almost gone," reminisced Maxidiwiac (*mah-chee-dee-WEI-ahsh*), or Buffalo Bird Woman, in 1920. A Hidatsa Indian born about 1843 in present-day North Dakota, she found the changes overwhelming. "Sometimes I find it hard to believe I ever lived them [her Indian ways]," she continued. "My little son grew up in the white man's school. He can read books, and he owns cattle and has a farm. . . . But for me, I cannot forget our old ways." In her own lifetime, Buffalo Bird Woman had moved from a traditional native existence into the modern world.

President Jefferson's emissaries Meriwether Lewis and William Clark had wintered among the Hidatsas in 1804 and had been

impressed by their horsemanship and hunting ability. The Hidatsas in the 1840s had joined with two neighboring tribes to build a new village called Like-A-Fishhook. Initially the new settlement prospered. But, after the Civil War, as white settlers crowded onto their lands, Buffalo Bird Woman and her tribe were pressured by a nearby military garrison into signing away more and more of their territory and forced to scatter onto small farms. Buffalo Bird Woman and her tribe abandoned their village in 1885.

Buffalo Bird Woman's experience was all too common. The settlement of the trans-Mississippi West began with the removal of native peoples. This peaceful or, more commonly, brutal relocation of the Indians onto reservations opened up vast tracts of land for settlement and development. Miners, farmers, land speculators, and railroad developers in the 1850s flooded onto the fertile prairies of Iowa, Minnesota, and Kansas, carving the land into farms and communities. Then, in the 1860s, drawn by the earlier discovery of gold in the Rocky Mountains, these same settlers swarmed onto the Great Plains and the semiarid regions beyond them. Scarcely a decade later, the trans-Mississippi West became a contested terrain as native peoples fought to protect their homeland from these newcomers.

The transformation of the West left a mixed legacy. Although many white families prospered on the High Plains, the rapid development of the land and its resources threatened not only the Native Americans, but also the environment and sometimes the settlers themselves. Unscrupulous westerners exploited white, Native American, Chinese, and Mexican laborers alike. Hunters slaughtered millions of bison for their hides, miners skinned the mountainsides in search of minerals, and farmers plowed up the prairie sod to build farms. Although westerners attributed their economic achievements to American self-reliance, the development of the trans-Mississippi West depended heavily on the federal government. The government sent troops to subjugate the Indians, promoted the acquisition of farm land through the Homestead Act (1862), and subsidized the transcontinental railroad lines. In their scramble for new economic opportunities, many Americans chose to view the destruction of the Indian ways of life as the necessary price of civilization and progress.

NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI WEST

How was Indian life on the Great Plains transformed in the second half of the nineteenth century?

No aspect of the transformation of the West was more visible and dramatic than the assault on the traditional Indian way of life. Caught between a stampede of miners and settlers who took their land and the federal government that sought to force them onto reservations, Native Americans fought back. By the 1890s confinement on reservations had become the fate of almost every Indian nation. Undaunted, Native Americans struggled to preserve their customs and rebuild their numbers.



Chronology

1862	Homestead Act; Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act; Pacific Railroad Act
1864	Nevada admitted to the Union; massacre of Cheyennes at Sand Creek, Colorado; George Perkins Marsh, <i>Man and Nature</i>
1867	Joseph McCoy organizes cattle drives to Abilene, Kansas; Medicine Lodge Treaty
1868	Fort Laramie Treaty
1869	Board of Indian Commissioners established; Wyoming gives women the vote
1872	Yellowstone National Park established
1873	Timber Culture Act; biggest strike on Nevada's Comstock Lode
1874	Invention of barbed wire; gold discovered in the Black Hills of South Dakota; Red River War
1875	John Wesley Powell, <i>The Exploration of the Colorado River</i>
1876	Colorado admitted to the Union; Little Bighorn massacre
1877	Desert Land Act
1878	John Wesley Powell, <i>Report on the Lands of the Arid Regions of the United States</i>
1881	Helen Hunt Jackson, <i>A Century of Dishonor</i>
1883	Women's National Indian Rights Association founded; William ("Buffalo Bill") Cody organizes the Wild West Show
1887	Dawes Severalty Act; Edmunds-Tucker Act
1888	White Caps raid ranches in northern New Mexico
1889	Oklahoma Territory opened for settlement
1890	Ghost Dance movement spreads to the Black Hills; massacre of Teton Sioux at Wounded Knee, South Dakota
1892	John Muir organizes Sierra Club
1898	Curtis Act

The Plains Indians

The Indians of the Great Plains inhabited three major subregions. The northern Plains, from the Dakotas and Montana southward to Nebraska, were home to several large tribes, most notably the Lakota as well as Flatheads, Blackfeet, Assiniboin (ah-SIN-ih-bwans), northern Cheyennes (shy-ANNS), Arapahos (a-RAP-a-hose), Crows, Hidatsas, and Mandans. Some of these were allies, but others were bitter enemies. In the Central Plains, the so-called Five Civilized Tribes, driven there from the Southeast in the 1830s, pursued an agricultural life in the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). Farther west, the Pawnees of Nebraska maintained the older, more settled tradition characteristic of Plains river valley culture. On the southern Plains of western Kansas, Colorado, eastern New Mexico, and Texas, the Comanches, Kiowas, Cheyennes, southern Arapahos, and Apaches still maintained a migratory life appropriate to the arid environment.

Considerable diversity flourished among the Plains peoples, and customs varied even within subdivisions of the same tribe. For example, the Dakota Sioux (soo) of Minnesota led a semisedentary life based on small-scale agriculture and bison hunting. In contrast, many Plains tribes—the Lakota Sioux, Blackfeet, Crows, and

Cheyennes—using horses obtained from the Spanish, roamed the High Plains to the west and followed the bison migrations.

For all the **Plains Indians**, life revolved around extended family ties and tribal cooperation. Families and clans joined forces to hunt and farm, and reached decisions by consensus. Sioux religion, which provided the cement for village and camp life, was complex. The Lakota Sioux thought of life as a series of circles. Living within the daily cycles of the sun and moon, Lakotas were born into a circle of relatives, which broadened to the band, the tribe, the Sioux Nation, and on to animals and plants. The Lakotas also believed in a hierarchy of spirits whose help could be invoked in ceremonies like the Sun Dance. On the semiarid High Plains, where rainfall averaged less than twenty inches a year, both the bison and the native peoples adapted to the environment. The huge bison herds, which at their peak contained an estimated 30 million animals, broke into small groups in the winter and dispersed into river valleys. In the summer, they returned to the High Plains in vast herds to mate and feed on the nutritious short grasses. Like the bison, the Indians dispersed across the landscape to minimize their impact on any one place, wintering in the river valleys and returning to the High Plains in summer.

The movement of miners and settlers onto the eastern High Plains in the 1850s threatened the Native American way of life. In the 1860s, the whites began systematically to hunt the animals to supply the eastern market with carriage robes and industrial belting. **William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody**, a famous scout and Indian fighter, killed nearly forty-three hundred bison in 1867–1868 to feed construction crews building the Union Pacific Railroad. Army commanders also encouraged the slaughter of buffalo to undermine Indian resistance. The carnage that resulted was almost inconceivable in its scale. Between 1872 and 1875, hunters killed 9 million buffalo, taking only the skin and leaving the carcasses to rot. By the 1880s, the once-thundering herds had been reduced to a few thousand animals, and the Native American way of life dependent on the buffalo had been ruined.

Plains Indians Diverse Native American societies inhabiting the region from the Dakotas to Texas

William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody Renowned scout, Indian fighter, and showman who symbolized the “Wild West” mythos

The Assault on Nomadic Indian Life

In the 1850s, Indians who felt pressure from the declining bison herds and deteriorating grasslands faced the onslaught of thousands of pioneers lured by the discovery of gold and silver in the Rocky Mountains. The federal government’s response was to reexamine its Indian policies. Abandoning the previous position, which had treated much of the West as a vast Indian reserve, the federal government sought to introduce a system of smaller tribal reservations where the Indians were to be concentrated, by force if necessary.

Some Native Americans peacefully adjusted to their new life. Others, among them the Navajos (**NAH-vuh-hohs**) of Arizona and New Mexico and the eastern Dakota Sioux, opposed the new policy to no avail. By 1860, eight western reservations had been established. Significant segments of the remaining tribes on the Great Plains, more than a hundred thousand people, fought against removal. Between 1860 and 1890, the western Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahos, Kiowas, and Comanches on the Great Plains; the Nez Percés (**nez per-SAY**) and Bannocks in the northern Rockies; and the Apaches in the Southwest faced the U.S. Army, toughened by its experiences in the Civil War, in a series of final battles for the West (see Map 17.1).



Library of Congress

Indian Mother and Son, c. 1890s

Indian children were taught to ride horses at an early age. Horses were a form of wealth for migratory Plains peoples and made hunting buffalo (depicted on the tipi) considerably easier.

Misunderstandings, unfulfilled promises, brutality, and butchery marked the conflict. Near Sand Creek, Colorado, in 1864, soldiers from the local militia who had replaced regular army troops fighting in the Civil War destroyed Cheyenne and Arapaho camps. The Indians retaliated with a flurry of attacks on travelers. The governor, in a panic, authorized Colorado's white citizenry to kill hostile Indians on sight. He then activated a regiment of troops under Colonel John M. Chivington, a Methodist minister. At dawn on November 29, Chivington's troops massacred a peaceful band of Indians, including terrified women and children, camped at Sand Creek.

This massacre and others that followed rekindled public debate over federal Indian policy. In response, in 1867 Congress sent a peace commission to end the fighting and set aside two large land reserves, one north of Nebraska, the other south of Kansas. Behind the federal government's persuasion lay the threat of force. Any Native Americans who refused to relocate, warned Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ely S. Parker, himself a Seneca Indian, "would be . . . treated as friendly or hostile as circumstances might justify." At first the plan appeared to work. Representatives of sixty-eight thousand southern Kiowas, Comanches, Cheyennes, and Arapahos signed the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867 and pledged to live on land in present-day Oklahoma. The following year, scattered bands of Sioux, representing nearly fifty-four thousand northern Plains Indians, signed the **Fort Laramie Treaty** and agreed to move to reservations in what is now South Dakota in return for money and provisions.

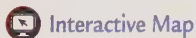
Fort Laramie Treaty

Agreement that moved thousands of Plains Indians to reservations in South Dakota in 1867



Map 17.1 Major Indian-White Clashes in the West

Although never recognized as such in the popular press, the battles between Native Americans and the U.S. Army on the Great Plains amounted to a major undeclared war.



Interactive Map

Indian dissatisfaction with the treaties ran deep. In August 1868, war parties of defiant Cheyennes, Arapahos, and Sioux raided frontier settlements in Kansas and Colorado, burning homes and killing whites. In retaliation, army troops attacked Indians, even peaceful ones, who refused confinement. That autumn, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer's raiding party attacked a sleeping Cheyenne village, killing more than one hundred warriors. Other Cheyennes and Arapahos were pursued, captured, and returned to reservations.

In 1869, spurred on by Christian reformers, Congress established a Board of Indian Commissioners to reform abuses on the reservations by Indian agents. But the new and inexperienced church-appointed Indian agents quickly encountered problems. Indians left the reservations in large numbers and agents were unable to restrain scheming whites who fraudulently purchased reservation lands from those who remained. Frustrated by the manipulation of Indian treaties and irritated by the ineptness of the Indian agents, Congress in 1871 abolished treaty making and replaced treaties with

executive orders and acts of Congress. In the 1880s, the federal government ignored the churches' nominations for Indian agents and made its own appointments.

Caught in the sticky web of an ambiguous and deceptive federal policy, defiant Native Americans struck back in the 1870s. On the southern Plains, Kiowa, Comanche, and Cheyenne raids in the Texas Panhandle in 1874 set off the so-called Red River War. In a fierce winter campaign, regular army troops slaughtered a hundred Cheyenne fugitives in Kansas. The exile of seventy-four "ringleaders" to reservations in Florida thus ended Native American independence on the southern Plains. In the Southwest, the Apaches fought an intermittent guerrilla war until their leader, Geronimo (jer-**RON**-eh-moe), surrendered in 1886.

Custer's Last Stand, 1876

Of all the acts of Indian resistance against the new reservation policy, none aroused more passion or caused more bloodshed than the battles waged by the western Sioux tribes in the Dakotas, Montana, and Wyoming. The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie had set aside the Great Sioux Reserve "in perpetuity." However, not all the Sioux bands had fought in the war or signed the treaty.

By 1873, Chief Red Cloud's Oglala band and Chief Spotted Tail's Brulé (**BROO**-lay) band had managed to remain on their traditional lands. To protect their hunting grounds, they raided encroaching non-Indian settlements in Nebraska and Wyoming, intimidated federal agents, and harassed anyone who ventured onto their lands.

Non-treaty Sioux found a powerful leader in the Lakota Sioux chief and holy man **Sitting Bull**. Broad-shouldered and powerfully built, Sitting Bull led by example and had considerable fighting experience. In 1874, General William Tecumseh Sherman sent a force under Colonel George Armstrong Custer into the Black Hills of South Dakota, near the western edge of the Great Sioux Reserve. Lean and mustachioed, the thirty-four-year-old Custer had been a celebrity since his days as an impetuous young Civil War officer.

Custer's mission was to extract concessions from the Sioux. In November 1875, negotiations to buy the Black Hills had broken down because the Indians' asking price was deemed too high. Custer now sought to drive the Indians out of the Black Hills. In June 1876, leading six hundred troops of the Seventh Cavalry, Custer proceeded to the Little Bighorn River area of present-day Montana, a hub of Indian resistance. On the morning of June 25, underestimating the Indian enemy and unwisely dividing his force, Custer, with 209 men, recklessly advanced against a large company of Cheyenne and Sioux warriors led by Chief Sitting Bull, who had encamped along the Little Bighorn. Custer and his outnumbered troops were wiped out.

Americans reeled from this unexpected Indian victory. Newspaper columnists groped to assess the meaning of "Custer's Last Stand." Some questioned the wisdom of current federal policy toward the Indians. Others worried that an outraged public would demand retaliation. Most, however, endorsed the federal government's determination to quash the Native American rebellion.

Defeat at Little Bighorn made the army more determined. In Montana, troops harassed various Sioux bands for more than five years, attacking Indian camps in the dead of winter and destroying all supplies. Even Sitting Bull, who had led his band to Canada to escape the army, surrendered in 1881 for lack of provisions. The slaughter of the buffalo had wiped out his tribe's major food source.

Sitting Bull Leader of the Sioux warriors who wiped out George Armstrong Custer's force at Little Bighorn in 1876

Similar measures were used elsewhere in the West. Chief Dull Knife of the northern Cheyennes led the remnants of his tribe north to join the Sioux in September 1878. But the army chased them down and imprisoned them in Fort Robinson, Nebraska. On a frigid night in January 1879, Dull Knife and his followers shot the guards and broke for freedom. Soldiers fired and gunned down half of them in the snow, including women and children as well as Dull Knife himself. Although sporadic Indian resistance continued until the end of the century, these brutal tactics sapped the Indians' will to resist.

"Saving" the Indians

Growing numbers of Americans were outraged by the federal government's flagrant violation of its Indian treaties. The Women's National Indian Rights Association, founded in 1883, and other groups took up the cause. **Helen Hunt Jackson** of Colorado published *A Century of Dishonor* in 1881 to rally public opinion against the government's record of broken treaty obligations. "It makes little difference . . . where one opens the record of the history of the Indians," she wrote; "every page and every year has its dark stain."

To encourage Indians to abandon nomadic life, reformers like Jackson advocated the creation of Indian boarding schools. Richard Henry Pratt, a retired military officer, opened such a school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1879. Pratt believed that the Indians' customs and languages had halted their progress toward white civilization. His motto therefore became "Kill the Indian and save the man." Modeled after Carlisle, other Indian boarding schools taught farming, carpentry, dressmaking, and nursing. Despite the reformers' best efforts, the attempt to stamp out Indian identity in the boarding schools often backfired. Forming friendships with Indians from many different tribes, boarding school students forged their own sense of Indian identity.

In addition to their advocacy of boarding schools, well-intentioned humanitarians concluded that the Indians' interests would be best served by breaking up the reservations, ending recognition of tribal governments, and gradually giving them the rights of citizens. In short, they proposed to eliminate the "Indian problem" by eliminating the Indians as a culturally distinct entity. Inspired by this vision, they supported the **Dawes Severalty Act**, which was passed in 1887.

The Dawes Severalty Act sought to turn Indians into landowners and farmers. The law emphasized severalty, or the treatment of Indians as individuals rather than as tribal members, and called for the distribution of 160 acres of reservation land to each head of an Indian family who accepted the law's provisions. The remaining reservation lands were to be sold to speculators and settlers. To prevent unscrupulous people from taking the lands granted to individual Indians, the government would hold each tribal member's property in trust for twenty-five years and make them U.S. citizens.

The Dawes Act proved to be a boon to speculators, who commonly evaded its safeguards and obtained the Indians' best land. By 1934, the act had slashed Indian acreage by 65 percent. Much of what remained in Indian hands was too dry and gravelly for farming. Although some Native Americans who received land under the Dawes Act prospered enough to expand their holdings, countless others struggled just to survive. Alcoholism, a continuing problem exacerbated by the prevalence of whiskey as a trade item, became more prevalent as Native Americans strove to adapt to the constraints of reservation life.

Helen Hunt Jackson

Humanitarian and author who popularized wrongs done to Indians

Dawes Severalty Act Law intended to "civilize" Indians by distributing tribal lands to individuals

The Ghost Dance and the End of Indian Resistance on the Great Plains, 1890

Ghost Dance Ritual that the prophet Wovoka promised would restore Indians to control of their lands

Living conditions for the Sioux worsened in the late 1880s. The federal government reduced their meat rations and restricted hunting. When disease killed a third of their cattle, they became desperate. The Sioux turned to Wovoka, a new visionary prophet popular among the Great Basin Indians in Nevada. Wovoka foresaw a catastrophic event that would bring the return of dead relatives, the restoration of the bison herds, and the renewal of traditional life. Some versions of his vision included the destruction of European-Americans. To bring on this new day, the prophet preached a return to traditional ethics, and taught his followers a cycle of ritual songs and dance steps known as the **Ghost Dance**.

In the fall of 1890, as the Ghost Dance movement spread among the Sioux in the Dakota Territory, Indian officials grew alarmed. The local reservation agent decided that Chief Sitting Bull, whose cabin on the reservation had become a rallying point for the Ghost Dance movement, must be arrested. When two policemen pulled



Wounded Knee, Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota, 1890

Thrown into an open trench, the frozen bodies of the Sioux slaughtered at Wounded Knee were a grim reminder that the U.S. Army would brook no opposition to its control of Indian reservations.

the chief from his cabin, shots rang out, and Sitting Bull was mortally wounded. As bullets whizzed by, Sitting Bull's horse began to perform the tricks it remembered from its days in the Wild West show. Observers were terrified, convinced that the spirit of the dead chief had entered his horse.

Two weeks later, one of the bloodiest episodes of Indian-white strife on the Plains occurred. On December 29, as the Seventh Cavalry was rounding up 340 starving and freezing Sioux at **Wounded Knee**, South Dakota, a shot was fired. The soldiers retaliated with cannon fire. Within minutes three hundred Indians, including seven infants, were slaughtered. As the frozen corpses at Wounded Knee were dumped into mass graves, a generation of Indian-white conflict on the Great Plains shuddered to a close.

Many Native Americans did try to adapt to non-Indian ways, and some succeeded fully. Goodbird, the son of Buffalo Bird Woman, became a Congregational minister, a prosperous farmer, and a leader of the Hidatsa tribe. Others struggled with poverty. Driven onto reservations, many Indians became dependent on governmental support. By 1900, the Plains Indian population had shrunk from nearly a quarter-million to just over a hundred thousand. Nevertheless, the population began to increase slowly after 1900. Against overwhelming odds, the pride, religious traditions, and cultural identities of the Plains Indians survived all efforts at eradication.

Unlike the nomadic western Sioux, the more settled Navajos of the Southwest adjusted more successfully to the reservation system, preserving traditional ways while incorporating elements of the new order. By 1900, the Navajos had tripled their reservation land, dramatically increased their numbers and their herds, and carved out for themselves a distinct place in Arizona and New Mexico.

In the name of civilization and progress, whites after the Civil War had forced Indians off their lands in an effort that involved a mixture of sincere (if misguided) benevolence, coercion wrapped in an aura of legality, and outbursts of naked violence. Many white Americans felt only contempt for Indians and greed for their land. Others had tried to uplift and Christianize the natives. Both groups, however, were blind to the value of Native American life and traditions. And both were unsuccessful in their attempts to shatter proud peoples and their ancient cultures.

Wounded Knee Massacre of three hundred Indians by the U.S. Army in 1890; the last chapter of the battle for the Great Plains

CHECKING IN

- The destruction of the Great Plains buffalo herds opened the way for the destruction of the Plains Indians.
- The battle for control of the Plains pitted nomadic Indians who rejected reservation life against the U.S. Army.
- Custer's Last Stand, in which Indians wiped out 209 cavalry troops, infuriated Americans and increased support for violence against the Plains tribes.
- The Dawes Severalty Act sought to "civilize" Plains Indians by dissolving tribal bonds and distributing tribal lands among individual Indians and speculators.
- The massacre of 300 starving Indians at Wounded Knee signaled the end of armed conflict on the Great Plains.

SETTLING THE WEST

What roles did the federal government, the army, and the railroads play in the settlement of the West?

The successive defeats of the Native Americans opened a vast territory for settlement. After 1870, railroad expansion made the overland trip from the East to Oregon and California—previously a six- to eight-month trip in ox-drawn wagons—faster and easier than ever before. In the next three decades, more land was parceled out into farms than in the previous 250 years of American history combined, and agricultural production doubled.

The First Transcontinental Railroad

Passed in 1862, the Pacific Railroad Act authorized the construction of a new transcontinental link. The act provided grants of land and other subsidies to the railroads for each mile of track laid, which made them the largest landholders in the West. More than any other factor, the expansion of these railroads accelerated the transformation of everyday life west of the Mississippi.

Building the railroad took backbreaking work. Searching for inexpensive labor, the railroads turned to immigrants. For example, the Central Pacific employed Chinese workers to chip and blast rail bed out of solid rock in the Sierra Nevada (see Table 17.1). Nearly twelve thousand Chinese graded the roadbed while Irish, Mexican-American, and black workers put down the track.

On May 10, 1869, Americans celebrated the completion of the first railroad spanning North America. As the two sets of tracks—the Union Pacific’s, stretching westward from Omaha, Nebraska, and the Central Pacific’s, reaching eastward from Sacramento, California—met at Promontory Point, Utah, beaming officials drove in a final ceremonial golden spike. The nation’s vast midsection was now far more accessible than it had ever been.

TABLE 17.1 THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND CHINESE POPULATION IN WESTERN STATES AND TERRITORIES, 1880–1900

STATE OR TERRITORY	BLACKS		CHINESE	
Arizona Terr.	155	1,846	1,630	1,419
California	6,018	11,045	75,132	45,753
Colorado	2,435	8,570	612	599
Idaho	53	293	3,379	1,467
Kansas	43,107	52,003	19	39
Montana	346	1,523	1,765	1,739
Nebraska	2,385	6,269	18	180
Nevada	488	134	5,416	1,352
New Mexico Terr.	1,015	1,610	57	341
North Dakota	113	286	NA	32
Oklahoma Indian Terr.	NA	56,684*	NA	31
Oregon	487	1,105	9,510	10,397
South Dakota	288	465	NA	165
Texas	393,384	620,722	136	836
Utah	232	672	510	572
Washington	325	2,514	3,186	3,629

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Negro Population in the United States, 1790–1915* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1918), 43, 44; Michael Doran, “Population Statistics of Nineteenth Century Indian Territory,” *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 53 No. 4 (Winter 1975), 501; and *The Tenth Census, 1880, Population, and Twelfth Census, 1900, Population* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1883 & 1901).

* Combined total for Indian and Oklahoma territories.

The railroads sped up western development. In the battles against Native Americans, the army shipped horses and men west in the dead of winter to attack the Indians when they were most vulnerable. From the same trains, hunters gained quick access to the bison ranges and increased their harvest of the animals. Once Indian resistance had been broken, the railroads hastened the arrival of new settlers and provided access for the shipment of cattle and grain to eastern urban markets.

Settlers and the Railroad

During the decade after the passage of the Pacific Railroad Act, Congress awarded the railroads 170 million acres, worth over half a billion dollars. By 1893, Minnesota and Washington had also deeded to railroad companies a quarter of their state lands. As mighty landowners, the railroads had a unique opportunity to shape settlement in the region—and to reap enormous profits (see Map 17.2).

The railroads set up land sales offices and sent agents to the East Coast and Europe to recruit settlers. The land bureaus offered prospective buyers long-term



Map 17.2 Transcontinental Railroads and Federal Land Grants, 1850–1900

Despite the laissez-faire ideology that argued against government interference in business, Congress heavily subsidized American railroads and gave them millions of acres of land. As illustrated in the box, belts of land were reserved on either side of a railroad's right of way. Until the railroad claimed the exact one-mile-square sections it chose to possess, all such sections within the belt remained closed to settlement.

loans and free transportation. Acknowledging that life on the Great Plains could be lonely, the promoters advised young men to bring their wives (because “maidens are scarce”) and to emigrate as entire families and with friends. The railroads also helped bring nearly 2.2 million foreign-born settlers to the trans-Mississippi West between 1870 and 1900. Some agents recruited whole villages of Germans and eastern Europeans to relocate to the North Dakota plains.

The railroads influenced agriculture as well. To ensure repayment of money owed to them, the railroads urged new immigrants to specialize in cash crops—wheat on the northern Plains, corn in Iowa and Kansas, cotton in Texas. Although these crops initially brought in high revenues, many farmers grew dependent on income from a single crop and became vulnerable to fluctuating market forces.

Homesteading on the Great Plains

Liberalized land laws pulled settlers westward. The 1862 Homestead Act reflected the Republican Party’s belief that free land would promote economic opportunity. It offered 160 acres of land to anyone who would pay a ten-dollar registration fee, live on the land for five years, and cultivate it. Although nearly four hundred thousand families claimed land under its provisions between 1860 and 1900, the law did not function as Congress had envisioned. Unscrupulous speculators filed false claims for the choicest locations, and railroads acquired huge landholdings. Only one acre in every nine went to the pioneers for whom it was intended.

The 160-acre limit specified by the Homestead Act created a second problem. On the rich soils of Iowa, a 160-acre farm was ample, but in the drier areas west of the hundredth meridian, a farmer needed more land. In 1873, to rectify this problem, Congress passed the Timber Culture Act, which gave homesteaders an additional 160 acres if they planted trees on 40 acres. For states with little rainfall, Congress enacted the Desert Land Act in 1877, which made 640 acres available at \$1.25 an acre. However, this act was abused by grasping speculators, lumber-company representatives, and cattle ranchers. Even though families did not receive as much land as Congress had intended, federal laws kept alive the dream of the West as a place for new beginnings.

In addition to problems caused by insufficient rainfall in many regions, almost all settlers faced difficult psychological adjustments to frontier life. The first years of settlement were the most difficult. Toiling to build a house, plant the first crop, and dig a well, the pioneers put in an average of sixty-eight hours of backbreaking work a week in isolated surroundings. For blacks who emigrated from the South to Kansas and other parts of the Plains after the Civil War, prejudice compounded the burdens of adjusting to a different life (see Chapter 16).

Many women found adaptation to Plains frontier life especially difficult. At least initially, some were enchanted by the landscape. But far more were struck by the “horrible tribes of Mosquitoes” and the crude sod huts that served as their early homes because of the scarcity of timber. One woman burst into tears upon first seeing her new sod house. The young bride angrily informed her husband that her father had built a better house for his hogs.

The high transience rate on the Great Plains in these years reflected the difficulty that newcomers faced in adjusting. Nearly half of those who staked homestead claims in Kansas between 1862 and 1890 gave up and moved on. Those who stayed eventually came to identify deeply with the land. Within a decade, the typical Plains

family that had “stuck it out” had moved into a new wood-framed house and had fixed up the front parlor. There were just enough of these success stories to sustain the popular ideal of the West as a place of hope and opportunity.

New Farms, New Markets

Farmers on the Plains took advantage of advances in farm mechanization and the development of improved strains of wheat and corn to boost production dramatically. Efficient steel plows; specially designed wheat planters; and improved grain binders, threshers, and windmills all allowed the typical Great Plains farmer of the late nineteenth century to increase the land’s yield tenfold.

Barbed wire, patented in 1874, was another crucial invention that permitted farmers to keep roving livestock out of their crops. But fencing the land touched off violent clashes between farmers and cattle ranchers, who demanded the right to let their herds roam freely until the roundup. Generally the farmers won.

The invention of labor-saving machinery together with increased demand for wheat, milk, and other farm products created the impression that farming was entering a period of unparalleled prosperity. But few fully understood the perils of pursuing agriculture as a livelihood. Faced with huge start-up costs and substantial mortgage payments, many farmers had to specialize in a crop such as wheat or corn that would fetch high prices. This specialization made them dependent on the railroads for shipping and put them at the mercy of the international grain market’s shifting prices. High demand could bring prosperity, but when world overproduction forced grain prices down, the heavily indebted grower faced ruin. Confronted with these realities, many Plains farmers quickly abandoned the illusion of frontier independence and easy wealth.

Unpredictable rainfall and weather conditions further exacerbated homesteaders’ difficulties west of the hundredth meridian, where rainfall averaged less than twenty inches a year. Farmers in such places used specialized “dry farming” techniques, built windmills, and diverted creeks for irrigation. But the onset of unusually dry years in the 1870s, together with grasshopper infestations and the major economic depression that struck the United States between 1873 and 1878 (see Chapter 16), made the plight of some midwesterners desperate.

Building a Society and Achieving Statehood

Despite the hardships, many remote farm settlements blossomed into thriving communities. Churches and Sunday schools became humming centers of social activity as well as of worship. Neighbors readily lent a hand to the farmer whose barn had burned or whose family was sick. Cooperation was a practical necessity and a form of insurance in a rugged environment where everyone was vulnerable to instant misfortune or even disaster.

When the population increased, local boosters lobbied to turn the territory into a state. Kansas entered the Union in 1861, followed by Nevada in 1864, Nebraska in 1867, and Colorado in 1876. Not until 1889 did North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Washington gain statehood. Wyoming and Idaho followed the next year, and Utah in 1896. Oklahoma’s admission in 1907 and Arizona’s and New Mexico’s in 1912 completed the process of creating states in the trans-Mississippi West.

Although generally socially conservative, the new state governments supported woman suffrage. As territories became states, pioneer women battled for the vote. Success came first in the Wyoming Territory, where men outnumbered women 6 to 1. The tiny legislature enfranchised women in 1869 in the hope that it would attract women, families, and economic growth. The Utah Territory followed in 1870. Nebraska in 1867 and Colorado in 1876 permitted women to vote in school elections. Although these successes were significant, by 1910 only four states—Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado—had granted women full voting rights.

Edmunds-Tucker Act Federal confiscation of Mormon church property to pressure it to abandon the practice of polygamy

CHECKING IN

- The completion of the first trans-continental railroad in 1869 opened the Great Plains for white settlement.
- Railroad companies encouraged the settlement of the Plains, recruiting settlers and offering loans and free transportation.
- The Homestead Act, offering free land to people who would farm it, lured tens of thousands of would-be settlers to the Plains.
- Homesteaders persevered in the face of such major obstacles as isolation, drought, and the perils of the commercial market.
- The Mormons, persecuted elsewhere, found a home in the West and helped Utah achieve statehood. By 1912 all western territories had been brought into the Union as states.

The Spread of Mormonism

Persecuted in Illinois, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, known as Mormons, moved to the Great Salt Lake Valley in 1847. Led by Brigham Young, their prophet-president, they sought to create the independent country of Deseret. Their faith emphasized self-sufficiency and commitment to family. In the next two decades, recruitment boosted their numbers to more than 100,000. These Mormon communities increasingly clashed with non-Mormons and with the U.S. government, which disapproved of the church's involvement in politics, its communal business practices, and its support of polygamy or plural marriage.

The Mormons sought at first to be economically independent. In 1869, they developed their own railroad lines out of Salt Lake City and set up Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution to control wholesale and retail activities. But a series of federal acts and court decisions, starting with the Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act in 1862, challenged the authority of their church and their practice of polygamy. In *United States v. Reynolds* (1879), the Supreme Court declared plural marriages unlawful. Then, in 1887, the **Edmunds-Tucker Act** dissolved the church corporation, abolished women's right to vote, and put its properties and funds into receivership (control by the courts).

In response, in 1890 the church president publicly announced the official end of polygamy. The church supported the application for statehood (Utah), which was granted in 1896. Confiscated church properties were returned, voting rights were restored, and jailed polygamists were pardoned, but the balance between sacred and secular had permanently shifted. Mormon settlements would continue in the twentieth century to draw new members and to influence development in western communities.

SOUTHWESTERN BORDERLANDS

How did ranchers and settlers displace Spanish-speaking Americans in the Southwest?

The treaty that ended the Mexican-American War in 1848 ceded to the United States an immense territory, part of which became Texas, California, Arizona, and New Mexico. At the time, Mexicans controlled vast expanses of the Southwest. They built their own churches, maintained large ranching operations, and

traded with the Indians. Although the United States had pledged to protect the liberty and property of Mexicans who remained on American soil, over the next three decades American ranchers and settlers took control of the territorial governments and forced much of the Spanish-speaking population off the land. Mexicans who stayed in the region adapted to the new Anglo society with varying degrees of success.

In Texas, the struggle for independence from Mexico left a legacy of bitterness and misunderstanding. After 1848, Texas cotton planters confiscated Mexican lands and began a racist campaign that labeled Mexicans as nonwhite. Mexican bandits retaliated by raiding American communities. Tensions peaked in 1859 when Juan Cortina, a Mexican rancher, attacked the Anglo border community of Brownsville, Texas. Cortina battled the U.S. Army for years until the Mexican government, fearing a U.S. invasion, imprisoned him in 1875.

Mexican-Americans in California in the 1850s and 1860s faced similar pressures. A cycle of flood and drought, together with a slumping cattle industry, ruined many of the large southern California ranches owned by the *californios*, Spanish-speaking descendants of the original Spanish settlers. The collapse of the ranch economy forced many of them to retreat into segregated urban neighborhoods called *barrios*. Spanish-surnamed citizens made up nearly half the 2,640 residents of Santa Barbara, California, in 1870; ten years later, after an influx of new settlers, they comprised barely a quarter of the population.

In many western states, Mexicans, Native Americans, and Chinese experienced similar patterns of racial discrimination, manipulation, and exclusion. At first, the number of new “Anglos” was small. As the number of whites increased, they identified minority racial, cultural, and language differences as marks of inferiority. White state legislators passed laws that made ownership of property difficult for non-Anglos. Relegated to a migratory labor force, non-Anglos were tagged as shiftless and irresponsible. Yet their labor made possible increased prosperity for the farmers, railroads, and households that hired them.

The cultural adaptation of Spanish-speaking Americans to Anglo society initially unfolded more smoothly in Arizona and New Mexico, where Spanish settlement had been sparse and a small class of wealthy Mexican landowners had long dominated a poor, illiterate peasantry. Moreover, since the 1820s, well-to-do Mexicans in Tucson, Arizona, had educated their children in the United States and had formed trading partnerships and business alliances with Americans.

Examples of successful cooperation between Hispanic and white Americans helped moderate American settlers’ antagonistic attitudes. So, too, did the work of popular writers like Helen Hunt Jackson, who sentimentalized the colonial Spanish past. Jackson’s 1884 romance *Ramona*, a tale of the doomed love of a Hispanicized mixed-blood (Irish-Indian) woman set on a California ranch overwhelmed by the onrushing tide of Anglo civilization, was enormously popular.

Still, conflicts over property persisted in Arizona and New Mexico. In the 1880s, Mexican-American ranchers organized themselves into a self-protection vigilante group called *Las Gorras Blancas* (the **White Caps**). In 1888, they tore up railroad tracks and attacked both Anglo newcomers and those upper-class Hispanics who had fenced acreage in northern New Mexico that had previously been considered public grazing land. However, this vigilante action did not stop the

White Caps Mexican-American vigilante group in northern New Mexico that protested the enclosure of grazing lands



Museum of New Mexico

Santa Fe Plaza, New Mexico, in the 1880s, by Francis X. Grosshenney

After the railroad went through in 1878, Santa Fe became a popular tourist attraction known for its historic adobe buildings.

CHECKING IN

- Violence frequently flared between Anglos and Mexicans in Texas and California.
- In California, thousands of Mexicans, deprived of their land, ended up in urban barrios.
- The Spanish-speaking population adapted more smoothly in New Mexico and Arizona, where their numbers were smaller.
- After losing their land, many Mexican-Americans became laborers.
- Women often held Mexican-American communities together, emphasizing culture and kinship.

Anglo-dominated corporate ranchers from steadily increasing their land holdings. Meanwhile, the Spanish-speaking population living in the cities became more impoverished. In Tucson, 80 percent of the Mexican-Americans in the work force were laborers in 1880, taking jobs as butchers, barbers, cowboys, and railroad workers.

As increasing numbers of Mexican-American men were forced to search for seasonal migrant work, women took responsibility for holding families and communities together. Women managed the households when their husbands were away and maintained traditional customs, kinship ties, and allegiance to the Catholic church. They tended garden plots and traded food and produce with other women, generally stabilizing the community in times of drought or persecution by Anglos.

Violence and discrimination against Spanish-speaking citizens of the Southwest escalated in the 1890s, a time of rising racism in the United States. Rioters in Beeville and Laredo, Texas, in 1894 and 1899 attacked and beat up Mexican-Americans. Whites increasingly labeled Mexican-Americans as violent and lazy. For Spanish-speaking citizens, the battle for fair treatment and respect would continue into the twentieth century.

EXPLOITING THE WESTERN LANDSCAPE

How did mining, ranching, and farming shape the West?

The displacement of Mexican-American and native peoples from their lands opened the way for the exploitation of the natural environment in the trans-Mississippi West. Between 1860 and 1900, a generation of Americans sought to strike it rich by joining the ranks of those convinced of the region's boundless opportunity. Although the mining, ranching, and farming "bonanzas" promised unheard-of wealth, they set in motion a boom-and-bust economy in which some succeeded but others went bankrupt or barely survived.

The Mining Frontier

In the half-century that began with the California gold rush in 1849, a series of mining booms swept from the Southwest northward into Canada and Alaska. In 1853, Henry Comstock, an illiterate prospector, stumbled on the rich **Comstock Lode** along Nevada's Carson River. Later in the same decade, prospectors uncovered deep veins of gold and silver near present-day Denver. Over the next five decades, gold was discovered in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota, and, in 1896, in the Canadian Klondike. By 1900 more than a billion dollars' worth of gold had been mined in California alone.

Comstock Lode Fabulously rich silver discovery that opened mining bonanza in the West

The early discoveries of "placer" gold, panned from streams, attracted a young male population thirsting for wealth and reinforced the myth of mining country as "a poor man's paradise." In contrast to the Great Plains, where ethnic groups recreated their own ethnic enclaves, western mining camps became ethnic melting pots. In the California census of 1860, more than thirty-three thousand Irish and thirty-four thousand Chinese had staked out early claims.

Although a few prospectors became fabulously wealthy, the experience of Henry Comstock, who sold out one claim for eleven thousand dollars and another for two mules, was more typical. Because the larger gold and silver deposits lay embedded in veins of quartz deep within the earth, extracting them required huge investments in workers and expensive equipment. No sooner had the major discoveries been made, therefore, than large mining companies backed by eastern or British capital bought them out and took them over.

Life in the new mining towns was vibrant but unpredictable. During the heyday of the Comstock Lode in the 1860s and 1870s, Virginia City, Nevada, erupted in an orgy of speculation and building. Men outnumbered women three to one. Money quickly earned was even more rapidly lost. The gold rush mania also spurred the growth of settlement in Alaska. Small strikes were made there in 1869, two years after the United States had purchased the territory from Russia. But it was the discovery of gold in the Canadian Klondike in 1897 that brought thousands of prospectors into the area and eventually enabled Alaska to establish its own territorial government in 1912.

Word of new ore deposits like the ones in Alaska lured transient populations salivating to get rich. Miners who worked deep within the earth for large corporations typically earned about \$2,000 a year at a time when teachers made \$450 to \$650 and domestic help \$250 to \$350. But most prospectors at best earned only

enough to go elsewhere, perhaps buy some land, and try again. And the work was dangerous. One out of eighty miners died annually in the 1870s.

Progress came at a high cost to the environment. Hydraulic mining turned creeks brown and flushed millions of tons of silt into valleys. The scarred landscape that remained was littered with rock and gravel filled with traces of mercury and cyanide, and nothing would grow on it. Smelters spewed dense smoke containing lead, arsenic, and other carcinogenic chemicals, often making those who lived nearby sick. The devastation is still evident today.

Cowboys and the Cattle Frontier

The feverish growth of open-range cattle ranching paralleled the expansion of the mining frontier during the 1860s and 1870s. In this case, astute businessmen and railroad entrepreneurs, eager to fund their new investments in miles of track, promoted cattle herding as the new route to fame and fortune. The cowboy, once scorned as a ne'er-do-well and drifter, was now glorified as a man of rough-hewn integrity and self-reliant strength.

In 1868, Joseph G. McCoy, a young cattle dealer from Springfield, Illinois, shrewdly transformed the cattle industry into a new money-maker. With the forced relocation of the Plains Indians onto reservations and the extension of the railroads into Kansas, McCoy realized that cattle dealers could now amass enormous fortunes by raising steers cheaply in Texas and bringing them north for shipment to eastern urban markets.

McCoy built a new stockyard in Abilene, Kansas. To make the overland cattle drives from Texas to Abilene easier, McCoy also helped survey and shorten the Chisholm Trail in Kansas. At the end of his first year in business, thirty-five thousand steers were sold in Abilene; the following year the number more than doubled. The great **cattle drives** of the 1860s and 1870s turned into a bonanza for herd owners. Steers purchased in Texas at nine dollars a head could be sold in Abilene for twenty-eight dollars. But the cattlemen, like the grain growers farther north on the Great Plains, lived at the mercy of high interest rates and an unstable market. During the financial panic of 1873, cattle drovers fell into bankruptcy by the hundreds.

Little of the money made by the large-scale cattle ranchers found its way into the pockets of the cowboys themselves. The typical cowpuncher endured long hours, low pay, and hazardous work, all for a mere thirty dollars a month, about the same as common laborers. They also braved the gangs of cattle thieves—most notably William H. Bonney, better known as Billy the Kid—that operated along the trails. Most cowboys were men in their teens and twenties who worked for a year or two and then pursued different livelihoods. Of the estimated 35,000 to 55,000 men who rode the trails in these years, nearly one-fifth were black or Mexican. Barred by discrimination from many other trades, blacks enjoyed the freedom of life on the trail.

The cattle bonanza, which peaked between 1880 and 1885, produced more than 4.5 million head of cattle for eastern markets. Prices began to sag as early as 1882, however, and many ranchers plunged heavily into debt. In 1885 and 1886, two of the coldest winters on record combined with summer droughts and Texas fever to destroy nearly 90 percent of the cattle in some regions, pushing thousands of ranchers into bankruptcy. The cattle industry lived on, but railroad expansion brought the days of the open range and the great cattle drives to an end.

cattle drives Millions of head of cattle moved from Texas grazing lands to the railroad terminals in Kansas in the 1870s and 1880s

Cattle Towns and Prostitutes

One legacy of the cattle boom was the growth of cities like Abilene, Kansas, which shipped steers to Chicago and eastern markets. Like other cattle towns, Abilene went through an early period of violence that saw cowboys pulling down the walls of the jail as it was being built. But the town quickly established a police force to maintain law and order. City ordinances—enforced by the legendary town marshal James B. “Wild Bill” Hickok—forbade carrying firearms and regulated saloons, gambling, and prostitution. Transient, unruly types certainly gave a distinctive flavor to cattle towns like Abilene, Wichita, and Dodge City, but the overall homicide rates there were not unusually high.

If cattle towns were neither as violent nor as lawless as legend would have it, they did still experience a lively business in prostitution. Given the large numbers of unattached young men and numerous saloons, prostitution thrived. Some became prostitutes as an escape from domestic violence or because of economic hardship. Others, like the Chinese, were forced into the trade. But whatever the reasons for entering the business, prostitutes faced a number of risks: venereal disease, physical abuse, and drug and alcohol addiction. As western towns became more settled, the numbers of women in other occupations increased.

Bonanza Farms

Like the gold rushes and cattle bonanzas, the wheat boom of the 1870s and 1880s started small but rapidly attracted large capital investments that produced the nation’s first agribusinesses. The boom in the Dakota Territory began during the Panic of 1873, when the Northern Pacific Railroad began exchanging land for its depreciated bonds. Speculators purchased more than three hundred thousand acres in the fertile Red River valley of North Dakota for between fifty cents and a dollar an acre.

Operating singly or in groups, the speculators established factory-like ten-thousand-acre farms, each run by a hired manager, and invested heavily in labor and equipment. On the Cass-Cheney-Dalrymple farm near Fargo, North Dakota, fifty or sixty plows rumbled across the flat landscape on a typical spring day. Cass’s first harvest earned a huge profit. The publicity generated by the tremendous success of a few large investors like Cass and Oliver Dalrymple led to an unprecedented wheat boom. North Dakota’s population tripled in the 1880s, and wheat production skyrocketed. However, the profits soon evaporated. By 1890, some Red River valley farmers were destitute.

The wheat boom collapsed for a variety of reasons. Overproduction, high investment costs, too little or too much rain, excessive reliance on one crop, and depressed grain prices on the international market all undercut farmers’ earnings. Large-scale farmers who had invested in hopes of getting rich felt lucky just to survive.

Large-scale farms proved most successful in California’s Central Valley. Using canals and other irrigation systems to water their crops, farmers by the mid-1880s were growing higher-priced specialty crops and had created new cooperative marketing associations for cherries, apricots, grapes, and oranges. By 1900, led by the California Citrus Growers’ Association, which used the “Sunkist” trademark for their oranges, large-scale agribusinesses in California were shipping a variety of fruits and vegetables in refrigerated train cars to midwestern and eastern markets.

The Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889

Curtis Act Dissolved the Indian Territory and abolished tribal governments in 1898

CHECKING IN

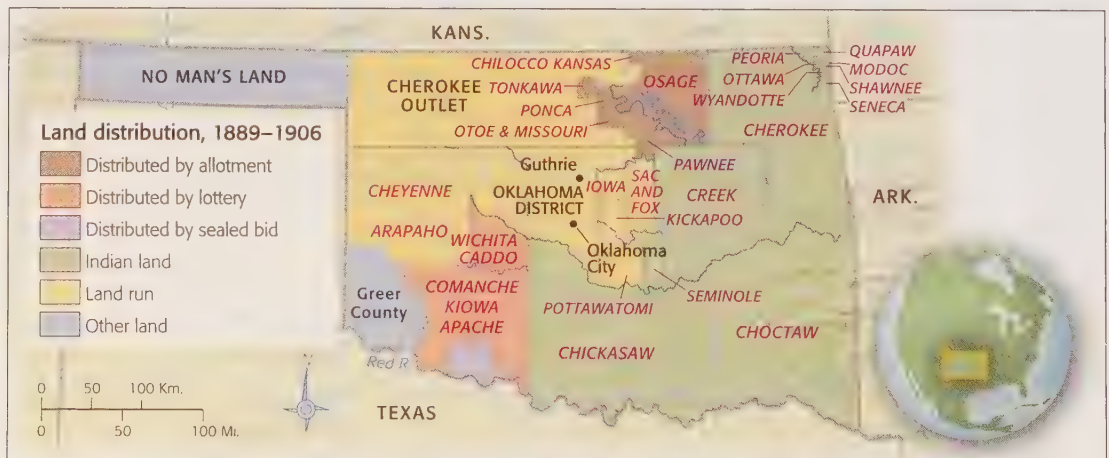
- Mining booms periodically flared in the West, producing a boom-and-bust cycle that enriched a few.
- The fabled era of the great cattle drives lasted a scant twenty years.
- The real-life low pay and hazardous work of cowboys and the settled monotony of cow towns were much less exciting than the fictionalized and romanticized version.
- Wheat farming became “agribusiness” in North Dakota, but weather and market forces deflated the boom in factory farms.
- The Oklahoma land rush, in which homesteaders staked claims to 2 million acres of free land, epitomized the power of the frontier myth.

As farmers in the Dakotas and Minnesota endured hard times, would-be homesteaders greedily eyed the Indian Territory, as present-day Oklahoma was then known.

The federal government, considering much of this land virtually worthless, had reserved it for the Five Civilized Tribes since the 1830s. These tribes (except for some Cherokees) had sided with the Confederacy during the Civil War. Although Washington had already punished them by settling other tribes on lands in the western part of the territory, land-hungry whites demanded even more land.

In 1889, over the Native Americans’ protests, Congress transferred to the federally owned public domain nearly 2 million acres in the central part of the Oklahoma Territory that had not been specifically assigned to any Indian tribe. At noon on April 22, 1889, thousands of men, women, and children in buggies and wagons stampeded into the new lands to stake out homesteads. (Other settlers, the so-called Sooners, had illegally arrived earlier and were already plowing the fields.) Nine weeks later, six thousand homestead claims had been filed. In the next decade, the Dawes Severalty Act broke up the Indian reservations into individual allotments and opened the surplus to non-Indian settlement (see Map 17.3). The **Curtis Act** in 1898 dissolved the Indian Territory and abolished tribal governments.

The Oklahoma land rush demonstrated the continuing power of the frontier myth, which tied “free” land to the ideal of economic opportunity. Still, within two generations a combination of exploitative farming, poor land management, and sporadic drought would place Oklahoma at the desolate center of what in the 1930s would be called the dust bowl (see Chapter 24).



Map 17.3 The Oklahoma Land Rush, 1889–1906

Lands in Oklahoma not settled by “Sooners” were sold by lotteries, allotments, and sealed-bid auctions. By 1907, the major reservations had been broken up, and each Native American family had been given a small farm.



Interactive Map

THE WEST OF LIFE AND LEGEND

How was the Wild West image of cowboys and Indians created, and what developments prompted the establishment of national parks?

In 1893, a young Wisconsin historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, delivered a lecture entitled “The Significance of the Frontier in American History.” “[T]he frontier has gone,” declared Turner, “and with its going has closed the first period of American history.” Although Turner’s assertion that the frontier was closed was based on a Census Bureau announcement, it was inaccurate (more western land would be settled in the twentieth century than in the nineteenth). But his linking of economic opportunity with the transformation of the trans-Mississippi West caught the popular imagination and launched a new school of historical inquiry into the effects of the frontier on U.S. history.

Scholars now recognize that many parts of Turner’s “frontier thesis,” particularly its ethnocentric omission of Native Americans’ claims to the land, were inaccurate. Yet his idealized view of the West did reflect ideas popular among his contemporaries in the 1890s. A legendary West had taken deep root in the American imagination. In the nineteenth century, this mythic West was a product of novels, songs, and paintings. In the twentieth century, it would be perpetuated by movies, radio programs, and television shows. The legend merits attention, for its evolution is fascinating and its influence has been far-reaching.

The American Adam and the Dime-Novel Hero

Late-nineteenth-century writers presented the frontiersman as a kind of mythic American Adam—simple, virtuous, and innocent—untainted by a corrupt social order.

For example, at the end of Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn*, Huck rejects the constraints of settled society as represented by Aunt Sally and heads west with the declaration, “I reckon I got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she’s going to adopt me and sivilize me, and I can’t stand it. I been there before.” In this version of the legend, the West is a place of adventure where one can escape from society and its pressures.

But even as this conception of the myth was being popularized, another powerful theme had emerged as well. The authors of the dime novels of the 1860s and 1870s offered the image of the western frontiersman as a new masculine ideal, the tough guy who fights for truth and honor. In *Buffalo Bill: King of the Border Men* (1869), a dime novel loosely based on real-life William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody, Edward Judson (pen-named Ned Buntline) created an idealized hero who is a powerful moral force as he drives off treacherous Indians and rounds up villainous cattle rustlers.

Cody himself, playing upon the public fascination with cowboys, organized his own **Wild West Show** in 1883. In the show, which toured the East Coast and Europe, cowboys engaged in mock battles with Indians, reinforcing the dime-novel image of the West as an arena of moral encounter where virtue always triumphed.

Wild West Show William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody’s extravagant Western-themed traveling show

Revitalizing the Frontier Legend

Eastern writers and artists eagerly embraced both versions of the myth—the West as a place of escape from society and the West as a stage on which the moral conflicts

confronting society were played out. Three young members of the eastern establishment, Theodore Roosevelt, Frederic Remington, and Owen Wister, spent much time in the West in the 1880s, and each was intensely affected by the adventure.

Each man found precisely what he was looking for. The frontier that Roosevelt glorified in such books as *The Winning of the West* (four volumes, 1889–1896), and that Remington portrayed in his statues and paintings, was a stark physical and moral environment that stripped away all social artifice and tested each individual's character. Roosevelt and Remington exalted the disappearing frontier as the proving ground for a new kind of virile manhood and the last outpost of an honest and true social order.

This version of the frontier myth reached its apogee in the enormously popular novel *The Virginian* (1902) by **Owen Wister**. In Wister's tale, the environment of the Great Plains produces individuals like his unnamed cowboy hero, "the Virginian." The Virginian is one of nature's aristocrats—ill-educated and unsophisticated but tough, steady, and deeply moral. The Virginian sums up his own moral code in describing his view of God's justice: "He plays a square game with us." For Wister, as for Roosevelt and Remington, the cowboy was the Christian knight on the Plains, indifferent to material gain as he upheld justice and attacked evil.

Needless to say, the western myth was far removed from the reality of the West. The idealized version of the West also glossed over the darker underside of frontier

Owen Wister Author of *The Virginian*, which portrayed the cowboy as a moral force



Chasm of the Colorado, 1873–1874, by Thomas Moran

Dazzled by the monumental beauty of the West, painters portrayed natural wonders such as the Grand Canyon as one of God's works. In the process, they stimulated a new popular interest in preserving the spectacular features of the land.

expansion—the hard physical labor of the cattle range, the forced removal of the Indians to reservations, the racist discrimination against Mexican-Americans and blacks, and the boom-and-bust mentality rooted in the selfish exploitation of natural resources.

Further, the myth obscured the complex links between the settlement of the frontier and the emergence of the United States as a major industrialized nation increasingly tied to a global economy. Eastern and foreign capitalists controlled large-scale mining, cattle, and agricultural operations in the West. Without the railroad—the brainchild of well-financed inventors, not rough-and-tumble cowboys—the transformation of the West would have been far slower.

Beginning a National Parks Movement

Despite its one-sided and idealized vision, Owen Wister's celebration of the western experience reinforced a growing recognition that many unique features of the western landscape were being threatened by overeager entrepreneurs. One important by-product of the western legend was a surge of public support for creating national parks and the beginning of an organized conservation movement.

Those who went west in the 1860s and 1870s to map the rugged terrain were often awed by the natural beauty of the landscape. Major **John Wesley Powell**, the one-armed veteran of the Civil War who charted the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon in 1869, waxed euphoric about its towering rock formations and powerful cataracts. "On coming nearer," he wrote, "we find fountains bursting from the rock, high overhead, and the spray in the sunshine forms the gems which bedeck the way." In his important study, *Report on the Lands of the Arid Regions of the United States* (1878), Powell called for public ownership and governmental control of watersheds, irrigation, and public lands, a request that went largely unheeded.

Around the time Powell was educating Congress about the arid nature of the far West, a group of adventurers led by General Henry D. Washburn visited the hot springs and geysers near the Yellowstone River in northwestern Wyoming and eastern Montana. Overwhelmed by the view, the Washburn explorers abandoned their plan to claim the area for the Northern Pacific Railroad and instead petitioned Congress to protect it from settlement, occupancy, and sale. Congress responded in 1872 by creating **Yellowstone National Park** to "provide for the preservation . . . for all time, [of] mineral deposits, natural curiosities, or wonders within said park . . . in their natural condition." In doing so, they excluded the Native Americans who had long considered the area a prime hunting range.

These first steps to conserve a few of the West's unique natural sites reflected the beginning of a changed awareness of the environment. In his influential study *Man and Nature* in 1864, **George Perkins Marsh**, an architect and politician from Vermont, attacked the view that nature existed to be tamed and conquered. "Man," he wrote, "is every where a disturbing agent. Wherever he plants his foot, the harmonies of nature are turned to discords."

Marsh's plea for conservation found its most eloquent support in the work of **John Muir**, a Scottish immigrant who had grown up in Wisconsin. In 1869, Muir traveled to San Francisco and quickly fell in love with the redwood forests. For the next forty years, he tramped the rugged mountains of the West and campaigned for

John Wesley Powell Explorer who wrote eloquently about the beauty of the West, which was a necessity for environmental conservation

Yellowstone National Park First national park founded as a result of the conservation movement

George Perkins Marsh Architect and politician from Vermont who challenged the notion that nature existed merely to be exploited

John Muir Conservationist who played a major role in wilderness preservation

CHECKING IN

- Historian Frederick Jackson Turner linked the frontier to economic opportunity but ignored the land's native occupants.
- Dime novels and Wild West shows reinforced the myth of the West as a moral arena where virtue always triumphed.
- Writers like Theodore Roosevelt and Owen Wister exalted the cowboy as a Christian knight on a pinto pony.
- John Wesley Powell led the way in extolling the western landscape, while stressing the need to conserve its resources.
- John Muir played a major role in encouraging preservation of the western wilderness and the creation of national parks.

their preservation. A romantic at heart, he yearned to experience the wilderness at its most elemental level. Once trekking high in the Rockies during a summer storm, he climbed the tallest pine he could find and swayed back and forth in the raging wind.

Muir became the late nineteenth century's most articulate publicist for wilderness protection. "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings," he advised city-dwellers. "Nature's peace will flow into you as the sunshine into the trees." Muir's spirited campaign to protect the wilderness contributed strongly to the establishment of Yosemite National Park in 1890. Two years later, the Sierra Club, an organization created to encourage the enjoyment and protection of the wilderness in the mountain regions of the Pacific coast, made Muir its first president.

Ironically, despite the crusades of Muir, Powell, and Marsh to educate the public about conservation, the campaign for wilderness preservation re-affirmed the image of the West as a unique region whose magnificent landscape produced tough individuals of superior ability. Overlooking the senseless violence and ruthless exploitation of the land, contemporary writers proclaimed that the settlement of the final frontier marked a new stage in the history of civilization, and they kept alive the legend of the western frontier as a seedbed of American virtues.

Chapter Summary

How was Indian life on the Great Plains transformed in the second half of the nineteenth century? (page 397)

After the Civil War, the Great Plains became a battleground between the nomadic Plains Indians and the U.S. Army. Under the banner of economic opportunity and individual achievement, Americans used the army to subdue the Indians, undermine their traditional way of life, and drive them onto reservations. Well-intentioned whites tried to "civilize" the Indians through measures such as the Dawes Act, but it was the massacre at Wounded Knee that finally marked the end of conflict on the Plains.

What roles did the federal government, the army, and the railroads play in the settlement of the West? (page 405)

Aided by federal subsidies and the protection of the U.S. Army, the trans-continental railroad was completed in 1869. The railroad companies actively recruited settlers. Homesteaders faced obstacles they had not foreseen— isolation, drought, the perils of the commercial agricultural market—but many persevered. The Mormons, persecuted elsewhere, found a home in the West and helped Utah achieve statehood in 1896. By 1912 all of the western lands had been brought into the Union.

KEY TERMS

Plains Indians (p. 399)
 William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody (p. 399)
 Fort Laramie Treaty (p. 400)
 Sitting Bull (p. 402)
 Helen Hunt Jackson (p. 403)
 Dawes Severalty Act (p. 403)
 Ghost Dance (p. 404)
 Wounded Knee (p. 405)
 Edmunds-Tucker Act (p. 410)
 White Caps (p. 411)
 Comstock Lode (p. 413)
 cattle drives (p. 414)
 Curtis Act (p. 416)
 Wild West Show (p. 417)
 Owen Wister (p. 418)

How did ranchers and settlers displace Spanish-speaking Americans in the Southwest? (page 410)

In California and Texas there were frequent clashes between Anglo and Mexican populations as the Mexicans gradually lost control of their lands; many Spanish-speakers ended up in urban barrios. In New Mexico and Arizona, adaptation went somewhat more smoothly. Nonetheless, Mexicans gradually lost status, and most became laborers.

KEY TERMS continued

John Wesley Powell (p. 419)

Yellowstone National Park
(p. 419)

George Perkins Marsh (p. 419)

John Muir (p. 419)

How did mining, ranching, and farming shape the West? (page 413)

All three of these sectors of the economy enjoyed periodic booms in the West, from the Comstock Lode to the great cattle drives to the bonanza wheat farms of North Dakota. However, these booms often led to busts, and they did serious harm to the environment.

How was the Wild West image of cowboys and Indians created, and what developments prompted the establishment of national parks? (page 417)

Dime novels and Wild West shows reinforced the idea of the West as a moral arena in which good triumphed; Theodore Roosevelt, Owen Wister, and other writers portrayed the cowboy as a heroic figure. John Wesley Powell and John Muir powerfully described the western landscape and urged its conservation, leading to the creation of a national park system.



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

The Rise of Industrial America

1865–1900

CHAPTER PREVIEW

The Rise of Corporate America

How did Carnegie, Rockefeller, and other corporate leaders consolidate control over their industries?

Stimulating Economic Growth

What innovations in technology and business drove increases in industrial production after 1865?

The New South

Why did the South's experience with industrialization differ from that of the North and the Midwest?

Factories and the Work Force

How did the changing nature of work affect factory workers' lives, and how did they respond?

Labor Unions and Industrial Conflict

How did corporate executives undercut labor's bargaining power in the 1890s?

On October 21, 1892, before two hundred thousand onlookers, presidential candidate Grover Cleveland proudly opened the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The Chicago world's fair represented the triumph of fifty years of industrial development. The country's largest corporations displayed their newest products, including Westinghouse Company's

dynamos, American Bell Telephone's connections to the East Coast, and Thomas A. Edison's phonograph. The fair dazzled its more than 25 million visitors.

Many late-nineteenth-century Americans found themselves both exhilarated and unsettled as the nation was transformed by



Court of Honor, World's Columbian Exposition, 1893

The Granger Collection, NYC

industrialization. At midcentury, the United States had played a minor role in the world economy. Five decades later, the country now produced 35 percent of the world's manufactured goods—more than England, Germany, and France combined. It had become one of the world's greatest industrial powers. By 1900, new enterprises both large and small, supported by investment bankers and using a nationwide railroad distribution system, offered a vast array of goods.

This stunning industrial growth came at a high cost. New manufacturing processes transformed the nature of work, undercut skilled labor, and created mind-numbing assembly-line routines. Large-scale manufacturing companies often polluted the environment. The challenges of new business practices made the American economy difficult to control. Rather than smoothly rolling forward, it lurched between booms and busts in business cycles that produced labor unrest and crippling depressions in 1873–1879 and 1893–1897.

THE RISE OF CORPORATE AMERICA

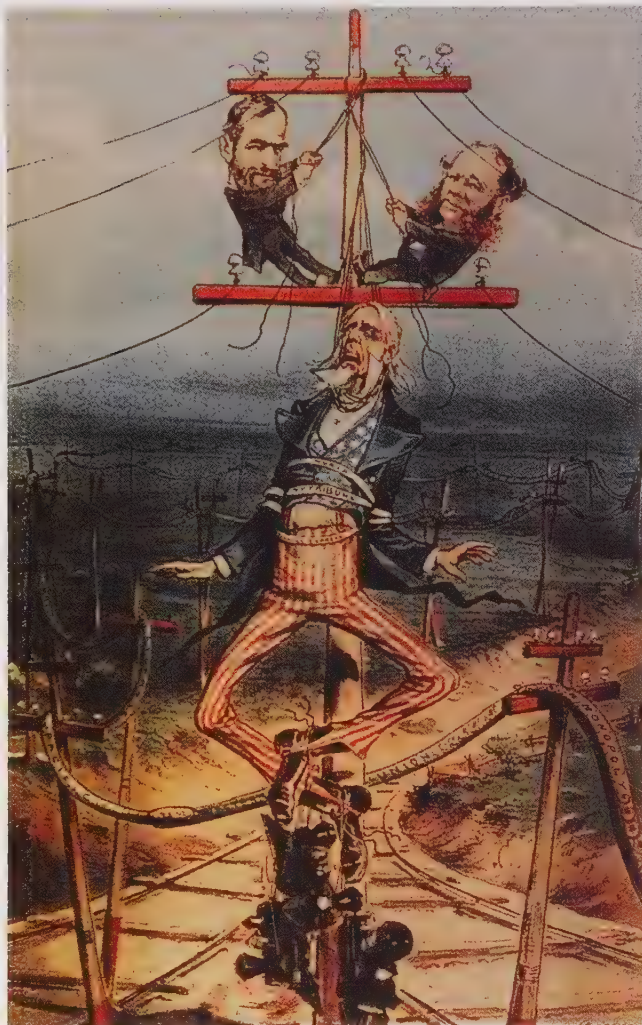
How did Carnegie, Rockefeller, and other corporate leaders consolidate control over their industries?

In the early nineteenth century, the corporate form of business organization had been used to raise large amounts of start-up capital for transportation enterprises such as turnpikes and canals. By selling stocks and bonds to raise money, the corporation separated the company's managers, who guided its day-to-day operation, from its owners. After the Civil War, American business leaders pioneered new forms of corporate organization that combined innovative technologies, creative management structures, and limited liability should the enterprise fail. The rise of the giant corporation is a story of risk-taking and innovation as well as of conspiracy and corruption.

The Character of Industrial Change

Six features dominated the world of large-scale manufacturing after the Civil War: (1) the exploitation of immense coal deposits as a source of cheap energy; (2) the rapid spread of technological innovation in transportation, communication, and factory systems; (3) the demand for workers who could be carefully controlled; (4) the constant pressure on firms to compete tooth-and-nail by cutting costs and prices; (5) the relentless drop in prices; and (6) the failure of the money supply to keep pace with productivity.

All six factors were closely related. The great coal deposits in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Kentucky provided cheap energy to fuel railroad and factory growth. New technologies stimulated productivity and catalyzed breathtaking industrial expansion. Technology also enabled manufacturers to cut costs and hire cheap unskilled or semiskilled labor. Cost cutting enabled firms to undersell one another, destroy weaker competitors, and consolidate themselves into stronger, more efficient, and more ruthless firms. Cheap energy, cost reduction, new technology, and fierce competition forced down overall price levels.



Frank & Hare-Therese Wood Print Collections, Alexandria, VA

Abusive Monopoly Power

This Puck cartoon depicts financiers Jay Gould (left) and Cornelius Vanderbilt (right) and suggests that their manipulation of markets and their ownership of railroads, telegraph companies, and newspapers is powerful enough to strangle Uncle Sam.

Jay Gould Captain of industry and owner of the Union Pacific Railroad

in 1837. To improve efficiency, they set up clearly defined, hierarchical organizational structures and used elaborate accounting systems. Railroad officials could set rates and accurately predict profits as early as the 1860s, a time when most businesses had no idea of their total profit until they closed their books at year's end. Railroad management innovations thus became a model for many other businesses seeking a national market.

Consolidating the Railroad Industry

The expansion and consolidation of railroading reflected both the ingenuity and the dishonesty flourishing on the corporate management scene. Despite advances in

Out of the new industrial system poured clouds of haze and soot, as well as the first tantalizing trickle of what would become an avalanche of consumer goods. In turn, mounting demands for consumer goods stimulated heavy industry's production of capital goods—machines to boost farm and factory output—even further. Together with the railroads, the corporations that manufactured capital goods, refined petroleum, and made steel became driving forces in the nation's economic growth.

Railroad Innovations

Competition among the aggressive and innovative capitalists who headed American heavy industry was intense, especially among the nation's railroads. By 1900, 193,000 miles of railroad track crisscrossed the United States—more than in all of Europe including Russia. These rail lines connected every state in the Union and opened up an immense new internal market.

Railroad entrepreneurs such as Collis P. Huntington of the Central Pacific Railroad and **Jay Gould** of the Union Pacific faced enormous financial and organizational problems. To raise the staggering sums necessary for laying track and building engines, railroads obtained generous land and loan subsidies from the government and borrowed money from the public (in the form of stocks and bonds). By 1900, the yearly interest repayments required by the combined debt of all U.S. railroads (which stood at an astounding \$5.1 billion—nearly five times that of the federal government) cut heavily into their earnings.

In addition to developing ways to raise large amounts of capital, the railroads created new systems for collecting and using information. Railroads relied heavily on the magnetic telegraph, a device invented



Chronology

1859	First oil well drilled in Titusville, Pennsylvania
1866	National Labor Union founded
1869	Transcontinental railroad completed; Knights of Labor organized
1870	John D. Rockefeller establishes Standard Oil Company
1873	Panic of 1873 triggers a depression lasting until 1879
1876	Alexander Graham Bell patents the telephone
1877	Edison invents phonograph; railway workers stage first nationwide strike
1879	Henry George, <i>Progress and Poverty</i> ; Edison perfects incandescent lamp
1882	Standard Oil Trust established; Edison opens first electric power station in New York City; Chinese Exclusion Act
1883	William Graham Sumner, <i>What Social Classes Owe to Each Other</i> ; Lester Frank Ward, <i>Dynamic Sociology</i>
1886	American Federation of Labor (AFL) formed; Haymarket riot in Chicago
1887	Interstate Commerce Act establishes Interstate Commerce Commission
1888	Edward Bellamy, <i>Looking Backward</i>
1889	Andrew Carnegie, "The Gospel of Wealth"
1890	Sherman Anti-Trust Act; United Mine Workers formed
1892	Standard Oil of New Jersey and General Electric formed; Homestead Strike; Columbian Exposition in Chicago
1893	Panic of 1893 triggers a depression lasting until 1897
1894	Pullman Palace Car workers strike
1901	J. Pierpont Morgan organizes United States Steel

organizational technique, the industry remained chaotic in the 1870s. Hundreds of small companies used different standards for track width and engine size. Huntington, Gould, and others devoured these smaller lines to create large, integrated track networks. West of the Mississippi, five companies controlled most of the track by 1893.

Huntington, Gould, and the other corporate leaders who expanded the railroad industry in the 1870s and 1880s often were depicted by their contemporaries as villains and robber barons who manipulated stock markets to line their own pockets. Recent historians, however, have pointed out that the great industrialists were a diverse group. Some were ironfisted pirates; others managed their companies with daring and innovation. Indeed, some of their ideas were startling in their originality and inventiveness.

The massive systems created by these entrepreneurs became the largest business enterprises in the world. They standardized all basic equipment and facilities. In 1883, independently of the federal government, the railroads corrected scheduling problems by dividing the country into four time zones. In May 1886, all railroads shifted simultaneously to the new standard 4' 8½" gauge track. Finally, cooperative billing arrangements enabled the railroads to ship cars from other roads at uniform rates nationwide.

However, the systemization and consolidation of the railroads had its costs. Heavy indebtedness, overextended systems, and crooked business practices forced the railroads to compete recklessly with each other for traffic. Competition and expansion drove some overbuilt lines into bankruptcy.

Stung by exorbitant rates and secret kickbacks, farmers turned to state governments for help. In the 1870s, midwestern state legislatures responded by outlawing rate discrimination. Initially upheld by the Supreme Court, these and other decisions were negated in the 1880s when the Court ruled that states could not regulate interstate commerce. In response to this situation, Congress passed the **Interstate Commerce Act** in 1887. A five-member Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) was established to oversee the practices of interstate railroads. Although the law was supposed to ban monopolistic activity, it went largely unenforced until the Progressive Era of the early twentieth century (see Chapter 21).

The railroads' vicious competition weakened in 1893 when a national depression forced a number of roads into the hands of **J. Pierpont Morgan** and other investment bankers. Morgan took over the weakened systems, reorganized their administration, refinanced their debts, and built intersystem alliances. By 1906, under the bankers' centralized management, seven giant networks controlled two-thirds of the nation's rail mileage.

Interstate Commerce Act

First federal attempt to control unfair practices by railroads

J. Pierpont Morgan

Investment banker who helped create U.S. Steel, as well as other huge corporations

Andrew Carnegie Scottish immigrant who built an enormous steel company

Applying the Lessons of the Railroads to Steel

The close connections between railroad expansion and the growth of corporate organization and management are well illustrated in the career of **Andrew Carnegie** (CAR-neh-gee). Born in Scotland, Carnegie immigrated to America in 1848 at the age of twelve. His first job as a bobbin boy in a Pittsburgh textile mill paid only \$1.20 a week. The following year, Carnegie became a Western Union messenger boy. Taking over when the telegraph operators wanted a break, he soon became the city's fastest telegraph operator. The job gave Carnegie an insider's view of railroad operations.

Carnegie's big break came in 1852 when Tom Scott, superintendent of the Pennsylvania Railroad's western division, hired him as his secretary and personal telegrapher. Later promoted to division chief, Carnegie cut costs while doubling the road's mileage. By 1868, Carnegie was earning more than \$56,000 a year from his investments, a substantial fortune in that era.

In the early 1870s, Carnegie decided to build his own steel mill. Carnegie's philosophy was deceptively simple: "Watch the costs, and the profits will take care of themselves." Using rigorous cost accounting and limiting wage increases to his workers, he lowered his production costs and prices below those of his competitors. His adoption of a new production technique named after its English inventor, Henry Bessemer, ensured a high-quality product.

As output climbed, Carnegie discovered the benefits of **vertical integration**—that is, controlling all aspects of manufacturing, from extracting raw materials to selling the finished product. By 1900, Carnegie Steel had become the world's largest industrial corporation. Carnegie's competitors, worried about his domination of the market, decided to buy him out. In 1901, J. Pierpont Morgan purchased Carnegie's companies and set up the United States Steel Corporation,

vertical integration Technique of controlling all phases of production, extracting maximum profit

the first business capitalized at more than \$1 billion (see Figure 18.1).

A systematic self-publicist, Carnegie consistently portrayed his success as the result of self-discipline and hard work. He also cultivated a reputation as a philanthropist, giving away more than \$300 million to libraries, universities, and international-peace causes. However, the full story was more complex. Carnegie's success came not just from his work ethic, but also from his opportunistic temperament and callousness in keeping wages for his workers as low as possible. To a public unaware of corporate management techniques, however, Carnegie's success lent credence to the idea that anyone might rise from rags to riches.

The Trust: Creating New Forms of Corporate Organization

Between 1870 and 1900, the same fierce competition that had stimulated consolidation in the railroad and steel industries also swept the oil, salt, sugar, tobacco, and meatpacking industries. The evolution of the oil industry illustrates the process by which new corporate structures evolved. After Edwin L. Drake drilled the first successful petroleum (or "crude-oil") well in 1859 near Titusville, Pennsylvania, competitors rushed into the business. Petroleum was distilled into oil, which soon replaced animal tallow as the major lubricant, and into kerosene, which became the leading fuel for household and public lighting.

By the 1870s the landscape near Pittsburgh and Cleveland was littered with rickety drilling rigs, assorted collection tanks, and ramshackle refineries. In this rush for riches, **John D. Rockefeller**, a young Cleveland merchant, gradually achieved dominance. Rockefeller opened his first refinery in 1863. Like Carnegie, the solemn Rockefeller had a passion for cost cutting and understood the benefits of vertical integration. In 1872, he purchased his own tanker cars and obtained not only a 10 percent rebate from the railroads for hauling his oil but also a kickback on his competitors' shipments. When new pipeline technology became available, Rockefeller set up his own massive interregional pipeline network.

Like Carnegie, Rockefeller aggressively forced out his competitors. If local refineries rejected his offers to buy them out, he priced his products below cost and strangled their businesses. When rival firms teamed up against him, Rockefeller set up a pool—an agreement among several companies—that established production quotas and fixed prices. By 1879, Rockefeller had seized control of 90 percent of the country's oil-refining capacity.

Worried about competition, Rockefeller in 1882 decided to eliminate it by establishing a new form of corporate organization, the **Standard Oil Trust**. In place of the pool, a verbal agreement among companies that lacked legal status, the trust

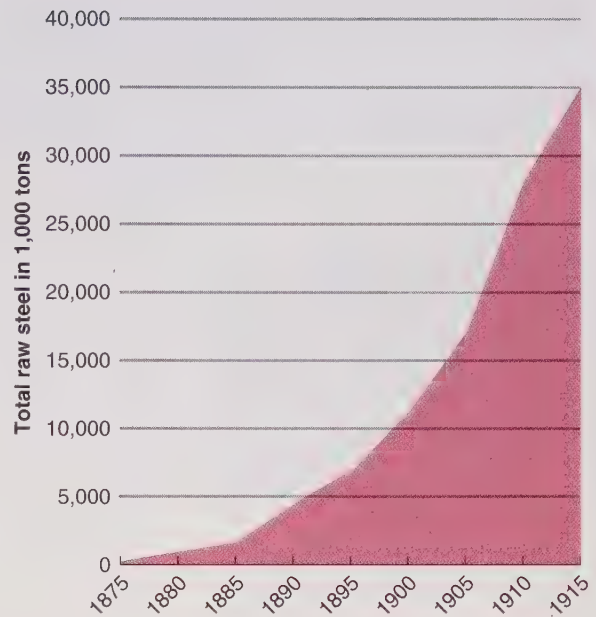


Figure 18.1 Iron and Steel Production, 1875–1915

New technologies, improved plant organization, economies of scale, and the vertical integration of production brought a dramatic spurt in iron and steel production.

Note: short ton = 2,000 pounds.

Historical Statistics of the United States.

John D. Rockefeller Creator of Standard Oil and master of the use of pools and trusts to monopolize an industry

Standard Oil Trust An umbrella organization of forty companies that controlled the U.S. oil industry

Sherman Anti-Trust Act Law against trusts; initially unsuccessful

CHECKING IN

- Immense coal deposits, rapid technological innovation, and the spread of the factory system combined with other factors to give birth to modern industrial America.
- Railroads, consolidated into enormous trunk lines, were symbols of industrial progress and laboratories for new business techniques and organization.
- Andrew Carnegie was the first to transfer lessons learned from the railroads to another industry, steel, and to use vertical integration on a large scale.
- John D. Rockefeller led the way in developing new forms of business organization, especially the trust.
- By the end of the nineteenth century, consolidation had resulted in the formation of huge corporations.

created an umbrella corporation that ran them all. Within three years the Standard Oil Trust had consolidated crude-oil buying throughout its member firms and slashed the number of refineries in half. In this way Rockefeller integrated the petroleum industry both *vertically* and *horizontally*, by merging the competing oil companies into one giant system.

Taking a page from Rockefeller's book, companies in the tobacco, copper, sugar, whiskey, lead, and other industries established their own trust arrangements. But their unscrupulous tactics, semimonopolistic control, and sky-high earnings provoked a public outcry. Both major political parties denounced them in the presidential election of 1888.

Fearful that the trusts would stamp out all competition, Congress passed the **Sherman Anti-Trust Act** in 1890. The Sherman Act outlawed trusts and any other monopolies that fixed prices in restraint of trade and slapped violators with fines of up to \$5,000 and a year in jail. But the act failed to define clearly either *trust* or *restraint of trade*. When Standard Oil's structure was challenged in 1892, its lawyers simply reorganized the trust as a giant holding company, which simply owned a controlling share of the stock of one or more firms. The new board of directors for Standard Oil (New Jersey), the new holding company, made more money than ever.

The Supreme Court further hamstrung congressional antitrust efforts by interpreting the Sherman Act in ways sympathetic to big business. In 1895, for example, the federal government brought suit against the sugar trust in *United States v. E. C. Knight Company*—and lost. Thus vindicated, corporate mergers and consolidations surged ahead. By 1900, these mammoth firms accounted for nearly two-fifths of the capital invested in the nation's manufacturing sector.

STIMULATING ECONOMIC GROWTH

What innovations in technology and business drove increases in industrial production after 1865?

Large-scale corporate enterprise was not the only cause of the colossal growth of the U.S. economy. Other factors proved equally important, including new inventions, specialty production, and innovations in advertising and marketing.

The Triumph of Technology

New inventions did more than streamline the manufacture of traditional products; they also stimulated consumer demand by creating entirely new product lines. The development of a safe, practical way to generate electricity, for example, made possible a vast number of electrical motors, household appliances, and lighting systems.

Many of the major inventions that stimulated industrial output in these years were largely hidden from public view. Few Americans had heard of the improved technologies that facilitated bottle making, canning, flour milling, and petroleum refining.

The inventions people did see were the ones that changed the patterns of everyday life: the sewing machine, mass-produced by the Singer Sewing Machine Company beginning in the 1860s; the telephone, developed by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876; and the light bulb, perfected by **Thomas A. Edison** in 1879.

These new inventions eased household drudgery and reshaped social interactions. The sewing machine, which relieved the tedium of sewing apparel by hand, expanded personal wardrobes. The spread of telephones not only transformed communication but also undermined social conventions for polite behavior that had been premised on face-to-face or written exchanges. The light bulb, by freeing people from dependence on daylight, made it possible to shop after work.

In the eyes of many, Thomas A. Edison epitomized the inventive impulse. Born in 1847 in Milan, Ohio, Edison, like Andrew Carnegie, had little formal education and got his start in the telegraphic industry. A born salesman and self-promoter, Edison shared Carnegie's vision of a large, interconnected industrial system resting on a foundation of technological innovation.

Edison's first major invention, a stock-quotation printer, in 1868, earned enough money to set up his first "invention factory" in Newark, New Jersey, a research facility that he moved to nearby Menlo Park in 1876. Edison boastfully predicted "a minor invention every ten days, and a big one every six months."

Buoyed by the success and popularity of his 1877 invention of a phonograph, or "sound writer" (*phono*: "sound"; *graph*: "writer"), Edison set out to develop a new filament for incandescent (*in-can-DESS-ent*) light bulbs. Edison realized that practical

Thomas A. Edison Inventor;
founder of the first industrial
research laboratory



Thomas Edison's Laboratories in Menlo Park, New Jersey, c. 1881

Always a self-promoter, Edison used this depiction of his "invention factory" to suggest that his development of a durable light bulb in 1879 would have an impact on life around the globe.

electrical lighting had to be part of a complete system containing generators, meters, and wiring. In 1882, the Edison Illuminating Company opened a power plant in the heart of New York City's financial district, furnishing lighting for eighty-five buildings.

In the following years, Edison and his researchers pumped out invention after invention, including the mimeograph machine, the microphone, the motion picture camera and film, and the storage battery. By the time of his death in 1931, he had patented 1,093 inventions and amassed an estate worth more than \$6 million. Edison's Menlo Park laboratory demonstrated that the systematic use of science in support of industrial technology paid large dividends. Invention had become big business.

Specialized Production

Along with inventors, manufacturers of custom and specialized products such as machinery, jewelry, furniture, and women's clothes dramatically expanded economic output. Keenly attuned to innovations in technology and design, they constantly created new products tailored to the needs of individual buyers.

Until the turn of the twentieth century, when ready-to-wear clothes came to dominate the market, most women's apparel was custom produced in small shops run by women proprietors. Unlike the tenement sweatshops that produced men's shirts and pants, dressmakers and milliners paid good wages to highly skilled seamstresses. The small size of the shops together with the skill of the workers enabled them to shift styles quickly to follow the latest fashions.

Thus, alongside of the increasingly rationalized and bureaucratic big businesses like steel and oil in the late nineteenth century, American productivity was also stimulated by small producers who provided a variety of goods that supplemented the bulk-manufactured staples of everyday life.

Advertising and Marketing

As small and large factories alike spewed out an amazing array of new products, business leaders often discovered that their output exceeded what the market could absorb. Strategies for whetting consumer demand and for differentiating one product from another represented a critical component of industrial expansion in the post-Civil War era.

The growth of the flour industry illustrates both the spread of mass production and the emergence of new marketing concepts. In the 1870s, the nation's flour mills installed continuous-process machines that graded, cleaned, hulled, ground, and packaged the product in one rapid operation. These companies, however, soon produced more flour than they could sell. To unload this excess, the mills thought up new products such as cake flours and breakfast cereals and sold them using easy-to-remember brand names like Quaker Oats.

Through the use of brand names, slogans, endorsements, and other gimmicks, manufacturers built demand for their products and won enduring consumer loyalty. For instance, Americans bought Ivory Soap, first made in 1879 by Procter and Gamble of Cincinnati, because of the absurdly precise but impressive pledge that it was "99 and 44/100ths percent pure."

In the 1880s, George Eastman developed a paper-based photographic film as an alternative to the bulky, fragile glass plates then in use and sold this film loaded into

an inexpensive camera. Consumers returned the camera to his Rochester factory where, for a charge of ten dollars, the film was developed and printed, the camera reloaded, and everything shipped back. In this manner, Eastman revolutionized an industry and democratized a visual medium previously confined to a few.

Social and Environmental Costs and Benefits

By 1900, the chaos of early industrial competition, when thousands of companies had struggled to enter a national market, had given way to the most productive economy in the world. An industrial transformation that had originated in railroad-ing and expanded to steel and petroleum had spread to every nook and cranny of American business.

The vast expansion of economic output brought social benefits, in the form of labor-saving products, lower prices, and advances in transportation and communications. However, the benefits and liabilities sometimes seemed inextricably interconnected. The sewing machine, for example, created thousands of new factory jobs and eased the lives of millions of housewives. At the same time, it encouraged avaricious entrepreneurs to operate sweatshops in which the immigrant poor toiled long hours for pitifully low wages (see Chapter 21).

For those who fell by the wayside, the cost could be measured in bankrupted companies and shattered dreams. John D. Rockefeller put things with characteristic bluntness when he said he wanted “only the big ones, only those who have already proved they can do a big business” in the Standard Oil Trust. “As for the others, unfortunately they will have to die.” The cost was high, too, for millions of American workers, immigrant and native-born alike. The vast expansion of new products was built on the backs of an army of laborers who were paid subsistence wages and who could be fired on a moment’s notice.

Industrial growth often devastated the environment as well. Rivers fouled by oil or chemical waste, skies filled with clouds of soot, and a landscape littered with reeking garbage and toxic materials bore mute witness to the relentless drive for efficiency and profit.

Whatever the final balance sheet of social gains and costs, one thing was clear: The United States had muscled its way onto the world stage as an industrial titan. The ambition and drive of countless inventors, financiers, managerial innovators, and marketing wizards had combined to lay the groundwork for a new social and economic order in the twentieth century.



Industrial Pollution

Although some Americans celebrated factory smoke as a sign of industrial growth, those who lived downwind, such as the longshoreman in this Thomas Nast cartoon, often suffered from respiratory diseases and other ailments. For him as well as for other Americans, the price of industrial progress was often pollution.

CHECKING IN

- Technology created new ways of manufacturing and new products that stimulated demand.
- Many inventions, such as the telephone and electric light, changed daily life.
- Edison established the first major research laboratory at Menlo Park, New Jersey, calling it “an invention factory.”
- Companies developed brand-name products and marketed them heavily.
- Rapid economic growth, with both negative and positive effects, propelled the United States to the forefront of the global economy.

THE NEW SOUTH

Why did the South's experience with industrialization differ from that of the North and the Midwest?

The South entered the industrial era far more slowly than the Northeast. As late as 1900, total southern cotton-mill output, for example, remained little more than half that of the mills within a thirty-mile radius of Providence, Rhode Island.

The reasons for the South's late economic blossoming are not hard to discern. The Civil War's physical devastation, racism, the scarcity of southern towns and cities, lack of capital, illiteracy, northern control of financial markets, and a low rate of technological innovation crippled efforts by southern business leaders to promote industrialization. Economic progress was also impeded by the myth of the Lost Cause, which, through its nostalgic portrayal of pre-Civil War society, perpetuated an image of the South as traditional and unchanging. As a result, southern industrialization inched forward haltingly and was shaped in distinctive ways.

Obstacles to Economic Development

Much of the South's difficulty in industrializing arose from its lack of capital. For example, the federal government required anyone wishing to start a bank to have fifty thousand dollars in capital. Few southerners could meet this standard. With banks in short supply, country merchants loaned supplies rather than cash to local farmers in return for a lien, or mortgage, on their crops (see Chapter 16). The burden of paying these liens trapped farmers on their own land and created a shortage of the labor needed for industrial expansion.

The South's chronic shortage of funds also limited the resources available for education. During Reconstruction, northern philanthropists together with various relief agencies had begun a modest expansion of public schooling for both blacks and whites. But Georgia and many other southern states operated segregated schools and refused to tax property for school support until 1889. As a result, school attendance remained low, severely limiting the number of educated people able to staff technical and managerial positions in business and industry.

Southern states, like those in the North, often contributed the modest funds they had to war veterans' pensions. In this way, southern state governments built a white patronage system for Confederate veterans. As late as 1911, veterans' pensions in Georgia ate up 22 percent of the state's entire budget, leaving little for economic or educational development.

The New South Creed and Southern Industrialization

Despite these obstacles, energetic southern newspaper editors such as **Henry W. Grady** of the *Atlanta Constitution* championed the doctrine that became known as the New South creed. The South's rich coal and timber resources and cheap labor, they proclaimed in their papers, made it a natural site for industrial development.

Henry W. Grady Editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* and tireless booster of his city and region

The movement to industrialize the South gained momentum in the 1880s. To attract northern capital, southern states offered tax exemptions for new businesses, set up industrial and agricultural expositions, and leased prison convicts to serve as cheap labor. Florida, Texas, and other states gave huge tracts of lands to railroads, which expanded dramatically throughout the South and in turn stimulated the birth of new towns and villages.

Following the lead of their northern counterparts, the southern iron and steel industries expanded as well. Birmingham, Alabama, was founded in 1871 in the heart of a region blessed with rich deposits of coal, limestone, and iron ore. In less than three decades, it grew into a bustling city with noisy railroad yards and roaring blast furnaces. By 1900 it was the nation's largest pig-iron shipper.

As large-scale recruiters of black workers, the southern iron and steel mills contributed to the migration of blacks to the cities. By 1900, 20 percent of the southern black population was urban. Southern industry reflected the patterns of racial segregation in southern life. Tobacco companies used black workers, particularly women, to clean the tobacco leaves while white women, at a different location, ran the machines that made cigarettes. The burgeoning textile mills were lilywhite. In the iron and steel industry, blacks, who comprised 60 percent of the unskilled work force by 1900, had practically no chance of advancement.

Black miners were also recruited by the West Virginia coal industry that lured them with free transportation, high wages, and company housing. In good times, wages for black workers in the lumbering industry could be better than those offered to farm laborers. Still, economic opportunities for blacks remained severely limited. During economic downturns workers were laid off or confined to work camps by vagrancy laws and armed guards.

The Southern Mill Economy

Unlike the urban-based southern iron and steel industry, the textile mills that mushroomed in the southern countryside in the 1880s often became catalysts for the formation of new towns and villages. In the mill towns, country ways and values suffused the new industrial workplace.

The cotton-mill economy grew largely in the Piedmont, the highland country of central Virginia and northern Georgia and Alabama. The Piedmont had long been the South's backcountry. But postwar railroad construction opened the region to textile-mill expansion. By 1920, the South was the nation's leading textile-mill center. Augusta, Georgia, with 2,800 mill workers, became known as the Lowell of the South, named after the mill town in Massachusetts where industrialization had flourished earlier.

Sharecroppers and tenant farmers at first hailed the new cotton mills as a way out of rural poverty. But appearances were deceptive. The chief cotton-mill promoters were drawn from the same ranks of merchants, lawyers, doctors, and bankers who had profited from the commercialization of southern agriculture. Cotton-mill entrepreneurs shamelessly exploited their workers, paying just seven to eleven cents an hour, 30 percent to 50 percent less than what comparable mill workers in New England were paid.

The mills dominated most Piedmont textile communities. The mill operator not only built and owned the workers' housing and the company store but also

supported the village church, financed the local elementary school, and pried into the morals and behavior of the mill hands. Because they were often paid in scrip—a certificate redeemable only in goods from the company store—workers frequently were drawn into a cycle of indebtedness like that faced by sharecroppers.

To help make ends meet, mill workers kept their own garden patches and raised chickens, cows, and pigs. Southern mill hands thus brought communal farm values, long associated with large farm families and nurtured through cooperative planting and harvesting, into the mills themselves. This helped ease the shift from rural to village-industrial life.

As northern cotton mills did before the Civil War, southern textile companies exploited the cheap rural labor around them, settling transplanted farm people in paternalistic company-run villages. Using these tactics, the industry underwent a period of steady growth.

The Southern Industrial Lag

CHECKING IN

- Lack of capital proved to be a major obstacle to southern industrialization.
- An underfunded, poorly attended public education system became another impediment to the industrialization of the South.
- Proponents of the New South creed urged industrialization, with some success.
- Cotton textile mills blossomed across the South from the 1880s onward.
- Despite such advances, the South lagged far behind the rest of the nation in industrialization and economic development.

Industrialization occurred on a smaller scale and at a slower rate in the South than in the North and also depended far more on outside financing, technology, and

expertise. The late-nineteenth-century southern economy remained essentially in a colonial status, subject to domination by northern industries and financial syndicates.

An array of factors thus combined to retard industrialization in the South. Banking regulations requiring large reserves, scarce capital, absentee ownership, wartime debts, lack of industrial experience, a segregated labor force, discrimination against blacks, and control by profit-hungry northern enterprises all hampered the region's economic development. Dragged down by a poorly educated white population as well as a largely unskilled black population, southern industry languished.

As in the North, industrialization brought significant environmental damage, including polluted rivers and streams, decimated forests, grimy coal-mining towns, and soot-infested cities. Although Henry Grady's vision of a New South may have inspired many southerners to work toward industrialization, economic growth in the South, limited as it was by outside forces, progressed in its own distinctly regional way.

FACTORIES AND THE WORK FORCE

How did the changing nature of work affect factory workers' lives, and how did they respond?

Industrialization proceeded unevenly nationwide, and most late-nineteenth-century Americans still worked in small shops. But as the century unfolded, large factories with armies of workers sprang onto the industrial scene in more and more locales. The pattern of change was evident. Between 1860 and 1900, the number of industrial workers jumped from 885,000 to 3.2 million, and the trend toward large-scale production became unmistakable.

From Workshop to Factory

The transition to a factory economy came not as an earthquake but rather as a series of seismic jolts varying in strength and duration. Changes in factory production

had a profound impact on artisans and unskilled laborers alike. The impact of these changes can be seen by examining the shoe industry. As late as the 1840s, almost every shoe was custom-made by a skilled artisan who worked in a small, independent shop. Shoemakers were aristocrats in the world of labor. They took pride in their work and controlled the quality of their products.

A distinctive working-class culture subdivided along ethnic lines evolved among these shoemakers. Foreign-born English, German, and Irish workers set up ethnic trade organizations and joined affiliated benevolent associations. Bound together by religious and ethnic ties, they observed weddings and funerals according to old-country traditions and relaxed together at the local saloon after work.

As early as the 1850s, changes in the ready-made shoe trade had eroded the status of skilled labor. The manufacturing process was broken down into a sequence of repetitive, easily mastered tasks. Thus, instead of crafting a pair of shoes from start to finish, each team member specialized in only one part of the process, such as attaching the heel or polishing the leather.

In the 1880s, shoe factories became larger and more mechanized, and traditional skills largely vanished. Shoe companies replaced skilled operatives with lower-paid, less-skilled women and children. By 1890, women made up more than 35 percent of the work force. Like the laborer whose machine nailed heels on 4,800 shoes a day, even “skilled” workers in the new factories found themselves performing numbingly repetitive tasks.

The Hardships of Industrial Labor

The expansion of the factory system spawned an unprecedented demand for unskilled labor. By the 1880s nearly one-third of the 750,000 workers employed in the railroad

and steel industries, for example, were common laborers. In the construction trades and the garment-making industries, the services of unskilled laborers were procured under the so-called contract system. Large companies negotiated an agreement with a subcontractor who supervised gangs of unskilled day laborers; these laborers were hired in times of need and laid off in slack periods.

Notoriously transient, unskilled laborers drifted from city to city and from industry to industry. In the late 1870s unskilled laborers earned \$1.30 a day, while bricklayers and blacksmiths earned more than \$3. Only unskilled southern mill workers, whose wages averaged a meager eighty-four cents a day, earned less.

Unskilled and skilled workers alike not only worked up to twelve-hour shifts but also faced grave hazards to their health and safety. Children were the most vulnerable. In the coal mines and cotton mills, child laborers typically entered the work force at age eight or nine. In the cotton mills, children could be injured by the unprotected pulley belts that powered the machines. In the coal industry, where children were commonly employed to remove pieces of slate from the conveyor belts, the cloud of coal dust that swirled around them gave them black lung disease—a disorder that led to emphysema and heart failure.



Library of Congress

Textile Workers

Young children like this one often were used in the textile mills because their small fingers could tie together broken threads more easily than those of adults.

For adult workers, the railroad industry was one of the most perilous. In 1889, the first year that the Interstate Commerce Commission compiled reliable statistics, almost two thousand rail workers were killed on the job and more than twenty thousand injured. Disabled workers and widows received minimal financial aid from employers. When a worker was killed or maimed in an accident, the family depended on minimal payouts from their fraternal organizations—or more commonly, the kindness of relatives or friends—for support.

Immigrant Labor

As we shall see in more detail in Chapter 19, factory owners turned to unskilled immigrant workers for the muscle they needed. Despite the hazardous conditions they found

in the factories, those immigrants who were disposed to work an eighty-four-hour week could save fifteen dollars a month, far more than they could have earned in their homeland.

Although most immigrants worked hard, few adjusted easily to the fast pace of the factory. Peasants from southern and eastern Europe found it difficult to abandon their seasonal work habits for rigid factory schedules. Factory operations were relentless, dictated by the unvarying speed of the machines. Employers used a variety of tactics to enforce discipline. Some sponsored temperance societies and Sunday schools to teach punctuality and sobriety. Others cut wages and put workers on the piecework system, paying them only for the items produced. Employers sometimes also provided low-cost housing to gain leverage against work stoppages; if workers went on strike, the boss could simply evict them.

In the case of immigrants from southern Europe whose skin colors were often darker than northern Europeans', employers asserted that the workers were non-white and thus did not deserve the same compensation as native-born Americans. Rather than being a fixed category based on biological differences, the concept of "whiteness" was thus used to justify the harsh treatment of foreign-born labor.

Women and Work in Industrial America

Women's work experiences, like those of men, were shaped by marital status, social class, and race. Upper-class white married women widely accepted an ideology of "separate spheres" (see Chapter 19) and remained at home, raised children, and looked after the household. The well-to-do hired maids and cooks to ease their burdens.

Working-class married women, in contrast, also often had to contribute to the financial support of the family. In fact, working for wages at home by sewing, button-making, taking in boarders, or doing laundry had predated industrialization. In the late nineteenth century, unscrupulous urban entrepreneurs exploited this captive work force. In the clothing industry, manufacturers hired out finishing tasks to lower-class married women and their children, who labored long hours in crowded apartments.

Young, working-class single women often viewed factory work as an opportunity. In 1870, 13 percent of all women worked outside the home, the majority as cooks, maids, cleaning ladies, and laundresses. But most working women intensely disliked the long hours, low pay, and social stigma of being a "servant." Between 1870 and 1900, the number of women working outside the home nearly tripled.

A variety of factors propelled the rise in the employment of single women. Changes in agriculture prompted many young farm women to seek employment in the industrial sector. Plant managers welcomed young immigrant women as a ready source of inexpensive unskilled labor. But factory owners treated them as temporary help and kept their wages low. In 1890, young women operating sewing machines earned as little as four dollars for seventy hours of work while their male counterparts made eight. Far from fostering economic independence, therefore, industrial work tied women more deeply to a family economy that depended on their earnings.

When the typewriter and the telephone came into general use in the 1890s, office work provided new employment opportunities. Women were attracted by the clean, safe working conditions and relatively good pay. First-rate typists could earn six

to eight dollars a week, which compared favorably with factory wages. Office work carried higher prestige and was generally steadier than work in the factory or shop.

Despite the growing number of women workers, the late-nineteenth-century popular press portrayed women's work outside the home as temporary. Few people even considered the possibility that a woman could attain prominence in the emerging corporate order.

Hard Work and the Gospel of Success

Horatio Alger Author of more than one hundred “rags to riches” books for boys

Although women were generally excluded from the equation, influential opinion molders in these years preached that any man could achieve success in the new industrial era. In *Ragged Dick* (1867) and scores of later tales, **Horatio Alger**, a Unitarian minister turned dime novelist, recounted the adventures of poor but honest lads who rose through initiative and self-discipline. The career of Andrew Carnegie was often offered as proof that the United States remained the land of opportunity and “rags to riches.”

Some critics did not accept this belief. In an 1871 essay, Mark Twain chided the public for its naiveté and suggested that business success was more likely to come to those who lied and cheated. What are the facts? Carnegie's rise from abject poverty to colossal wealth was the rare exception, as studies of nearly two hundred of the largest corporations reveal. Ninety-five percent of the industrial leaders came from middle- and upper-class backgrounds. The best chance of success for immigrants and native-born working-class Americans was in mastering a skill and rising to the top of a small company. Although only a few reaped immense fortunes, many improved their standard of living.

Thus, while some skilled workers became owners of their own companies, the opportunities for advancement for unskilled immigrant workers were considerably more limited. Some did move to semiskilled or skilled positions; yet, most immigrants, particularly the Irish, Italians, and Chinese, moved far more slowly than the sons of middle- and upper-class Americans who began with greater educational advantages and family financial backing. The upward mobility possible for such unskilled workers was generally mobility within the working class. Immigrants who got ahead in the late nineteenth century went from rags to respectability, not rags to riches.

One positive economic trend in these years was the rise in real wages, representing gains in actual buying power. Average real wages climbed 31 percent for unskilled workers and 74 percent for skilled workers between 1860 and 1900. Overall gains in purchasing power, however, were often undercut by injuries and unemployment during slack times or economic slumps. During the depressions of the 1870s and 1890s, wage cuts, extended layoffs, and irregular employment pushed those at the bottom of the industrial work force to the brink of starvation.

Thus, the overall picture of late-nineteenth-century economic mobility was complex. At the top of the scale, a mere 10 percent of American families owned 73 percent of the nation's wealth in 1890, while less than half of industrial laborers earned more than the five-hundred-dollar poverty

CHECKING IN

- Factory work was a numbing routine with no place for skilled workers.
- Unskilled workers received low pay for long hours and labored under hazardous conditions; children as young as eight worked in coal mines and cotton mills.
- Immigrants, the mainstay of the industrial labor force, answered the need for unskilled labor and were often paid less than native-born workers.
- Women entered the industrial work force through the longstanding practice of working at home for wages; many single women moved into the factory work force and then into office jobs.
- Reality often contradicted the “rags to riches” mythology, as most industrial laborers frequently confronted poverty.

line annually. In between the very rich and the very poor, skilled immigrants and small shopkeepers improved their economic position significantly. So although the standard of living for millions of Americans rose, the gap between the poor and the well-off remained a yawning abyss.

LABOR UNIONS AND INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

How did corporate executives undercut labor's bargaining power in the 1890s?

Aware that the growth of large corporations gave industrial leaders unprecedented power to control the workplace, labor leaders searched for ways to protect their members. But the drive to create a nationwide labor movement faced many problems. Employers deliberately accentuated ethnic and racial divisions within the work force. Skilled crafts workers, moreover, felt little kinship with low-paid common laborers. Thus, unionization efforts moved forward slowly and experienced setbacks.

Two groups, the National Labor Union and the Knights of Labor, struggled to build a mass labor movement that would unite skilled and unskilled workers. After impressive initial growth, however, both efforts collapsed. Far more effective was the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which represented skilled workers in powerful independent craft unions. The AFL survived and grew, but it represented only a small portion of the total labor force.

With unions weak, labor unrest during economic downturns reached crisis proportions. When pay rates were cut or working conditions became intolerable, laborers walked off the job without union authorization. These actions, called **wildcat strikes**, often exploded into violence. The bloody labor clashes of the 1890s would increase the demand for state regulation and eventually contribute to a movement for progressive reform.

wildcat strikes Spontaneous strikes not authorized by a labor union; some turned violent

Organizing Workers

From the eighteenth century on, skilled workers had organized trade unions to fight wage reductions and provide benefits for their members in times of illness or accident.

But the effectiveness of these organizations was limited. The challenge that labor leaders faced in the postwar period was how to boost the unions' clout. Some believed that this goal could be achieved by forming one big association that would transcend craft lines and pull in the mass of unskilled workers.

In 1866, Philadelphia labor leader William H. Sylvester called a convention in Baltimore to form a new organization, the **National Labor Union (NLU)**. The NLU endorsed the eight-hour-day movement, which insisted that labor deserved eight hours for work, eight hours for sleep, and eight hours for personal affairs. It also endorsed immigration restriction, especially of Chinese migrants, whom native-born workers blamed for undercutting prevailing wage levels. The NLU supported the cause of working women and urged black workers to organize as well, though in racially separate unions.

National Labor Union (NLU)
Early attempt to establish a single national union

When Sylvis's own union failed to win a strike in 1867 to improve wages, Sylvis turned to national political reform. He invited a number of reformers to the 1868 NLU convention, including woman suffrage advocates Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. But when Sylvis suddenly died in 1869, the NLU faded quickly.

Knights of Labor Organization that took up where the NLU left off; enjoyed considerable success for a while

The dream of a labor movement that combined skilled and unskilled workers lived on in a new organization, the **Knights of Labor**, which was founded in 1869. Led by Uriah H. Stephens of Philadelphia, the Knights welcomed all wage earners. The Knights demanded equal pay for women, an end to child labor and convict labor, and the cooperative employer-employee ownership of factories, mines, and other businesses. At a time when no federal income tax existed, they called for a progressive tax on all earnings, graduated so that higher-income earners would pay more.

The Knights grew slowly at first. But membership rocketed in the 1880s after the eloquent Terence V. Powderly replaced Stephens as the organization's head. In the early 1880s, the Knights of Labor reflected both its idealistic origins and Powderly's collaborative vision. Powderly opposed strikes and urged temperance upon the membership. Powderly advocated the admission of blacks into local Knights of Labor assemblies, although he allowed southern local assemblies to be segregated. The Knights welcomed women members; by 1886, women made up an estimated 10 percent of the union's membership.

Powderly supported restrictions on immigration and a total ban on Chinese immigration. In 1877, San Francisco workers demonstrating for an eight-hour work day destroyed twenty-five Chinese-run laundries. In 1880, both major party platforms included anti-Chinese immigration plans. Two years later, Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, placing a ten-year moratorium on Chinese immigration. The ban was extended in 1902 and not repealed until 1943.

Powderly's greatest triumph came in 1885. In that year, Jay Gould tried to get rid of the Knights of Labor on his Wabash railroad by firing active union members. Powderly instructed all Knights on the Wabash line to walk off the job and those on other lines to refuse to handle Wabash cars. This action crippled Wabash's operations. To the nation's amazement, Gould met with Powderly and canceled his campaign against the Knights of Labor.

Membership in the Knights of Labor soared. By 1886, more than seven hundred thousand workers were organized in nearly six thousand locals. The Knights mounted campaigns in nearly two hundred towns and cities nationwide that fall, electing several mayors and judges. Business executives warned that the Knights could cripple the economy and take over the country if they chose.

However, the organization's strength soon waned. Workers became disillusioned when a series of unauthorized strikes failed in 1886. By the late 1880s, the Knights of Labor was a shadow of its former self. Nevertheless, the organization had awakened in thousands of workers a sense of group solidarity and potential strength.

As the Knights of Labor declined, another national labor organization, pursuing more immediate and practical goals, was gaining strength. The skilled craft unions had long been uncomfortable with labor organizations like the Knights that welcomed skilled and unskilled alike. They were also concerned that the Knights' broad reform goals would undercut the interests of their particular crafts. The break came in May 1886 when the craft unions left the Knights of Labor to form the **American Federation of Labor (AFL)**.

American Federation of Labor (AFL) Skilled craft unions united under the leadership of Samuel Gompers

The AFL replaced the Knights' grand visions with practical tactics aimed at bread-and-butter issues. **Samuel Gompers**, the immigrant cigar maker who became head of the AFL in 1886 and led it until his death in 1924, believed in "trade unionism, pure and simple." Gompers argued that if labor were to stand up to the corporations, it would have to harness the bargaining power of skilled workers and concentrate on the practical goals of raising wages and reducing hours.

To persuade workers from the various trades to join forces without violating their sense of craft autonomy, Gompers organized the AFL as a federation of trade unions, each retaining control of its own members but all linked by an executive council that coordinated strategy during boycotts and strike actions.

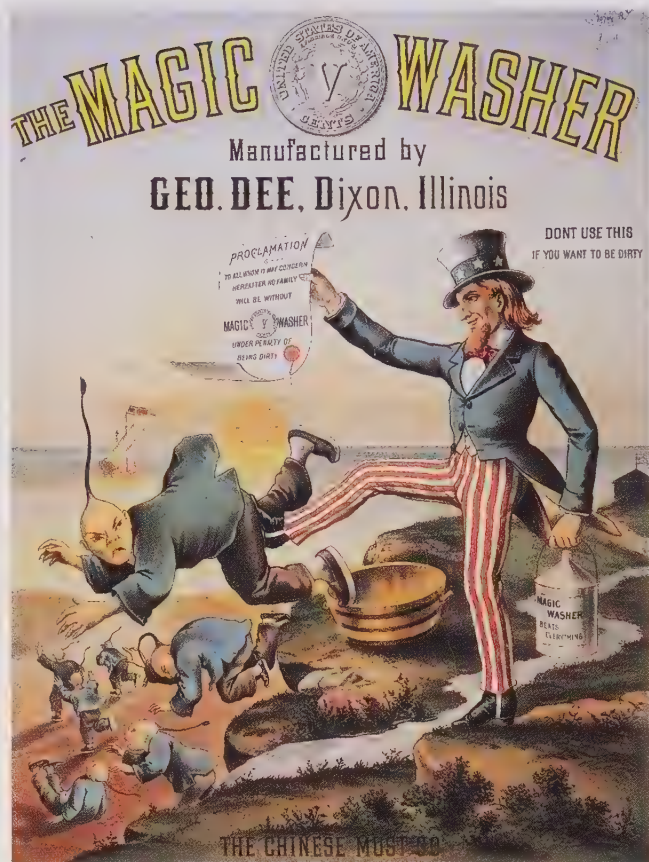
Gompers at first sidestepped divisive political issues. The new organization's platform did, however, demand an eight-hour workday, employers' liability for workers' injuries, and mine safety laws. The AFL did little to recruit women workers after 1894 because Gompers and others believed that women workers undercut men's wages. By 1904, the AFL had grown to more than 1.6 million strong.

Despite these advances, labor organizations before 1900 remained weak. Less than 5 percent of the work force joined union ranks. Split between skilled artisans and common laborers, separated along ethnic and religious lines, and divided over tactics, the unions battled with only occasional effectiveness against the growing power of corporate enterprise. They typically watched from the sidelines when unorganized workers launched wildcat strikes that sometimes turned violent.

Strikes and Labor Violence

Americans had lived with a high level of violence from the nation's beginnings. Terrible labor clashes toward the end of the century were part of this continuing pattern, but they nevertheless shocked and dismayed contemporaries. From 1881 to 1905, close to 37,000 strikes erupted, in which nearly 7 million workers participated.

The first major wave of strikes began in 1873 when a Wall Street crash triggered a major depression. The tension turned deadly in 1877 during a wildcat railroad strike. Ignited by a wage reduction on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad in July, the strike spread across the country. Rioters in Pittsburgh torched Union Depot. By the time troops could arrive to quell the strike two weeks later, nearly one hundred people had died, and two-thirds of the nation's railroads stood idle.



Ethnic and Racial Hatred

Conservative business owners used racist advertising, such as this trade card stigmatizing Chinese laundry workers, to promote their own products and to associate their company with patriotism.

Samuel Gompers AFL leader who focused on practical goals like wages, hours, and working conditions

The railroad strike stunned middle-class America. The same Americans who worried about Jay Gould and the corporate abuse of power grew terrified of mob violence. Employers capitalized on the public hysteria to crack down on labor. Many required their workers to sign “yellow dog” contracts in which they promised not to strike or join a union. Some hired Pinkerton agents, a private police force, to defend their factories and turned to the U.S. Army to suppress labor unrest.

Although the economy recovered, more strikes and violence followed in the 1880s. On May 1, 1886, 340,000 workers walked off their jobs in support of the campaign for an eight-hour workday. Three days later, Chicago police shot and killed four strikers at the McCormick Harvester plant. At a protest rally the next evening in the city’s Haymarket Square, someone threw a bomb from a nearby building, killing or fatally wounding seven policemen. In response, the police fired wildly into the crowd and killed four demonstrators.

Public reaction was immediate. Business leaders and middle-class citizens lashed out at labor activists and particularly at the sponsors of the Haymarket meeting, most of whom were associated with a German-language anarchist newspaper. Eight men were arrested. Although no evidence connected them directly to the bomb throwing, all were convicted of murder, and four were executed. In Haymarket’s aftermath, animosity toward labor unions intensified.

The events of 1892 amplified this trend. In one incident along Idaho’s Coeur d’Alene (**coor dah-LEEN**) River, miners blew up a mill and captured the guards sent to defend it. Back east that same year, armed conflict broke out during the **Homestead Strike** at the Carnegie Steel Company plant in Homestead, Pennsylvania. To destroy the union, managers cut wages and locked out the workers. When workers fired on the armed men from the Pinkerton Detective Agency who came to protect the plant, a battle broke out. Seven union members and three Pinkertons died. A week later the governor sent National Guardsmen to restore order. With the union crushed, the mills resumed full operation a month later.

The most systematic use of troops to smash union power came in 1894 during a strike against the Pullman Palace Car Company. In 1880 railroad car manufacturer George Pullman had constructed a factory and town, called Pullman, ten miles south of Chicago. When the depression of 1893 hit, he slashed workers’ wages without reducing their rents. In reaction, thousands of workers joined the newly formed American Railway Union and went on strike. Led by their fiery young organizer, **Eugene V. Debs**, union members working for the nation’s largest railroads refused to switch Pullman cars, paralyzing rail traffic in and out of Chicago.

In response, top railroad executives set out to break the union. They brought in strikebreakers and asked U.S. attorney general Richard Olney, who sat on the board of directors of three major railroad networks, for a federal injunction (court order) against the strikers for allegedly refusing to move railroad cars carrying U.S. mail. Olney, citing the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, secured an injunction against the union, arrested Debs, and sent federal troops in. During the ensuing riot, workers burned seven hundred freight cars, resulting in the deaths of thirteen people. By July 18 the strike had been crushed. In 1895, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Debs’s prison sentence and legalized the use of injunctions against labor unions (*In re Debs*).

Yet organizers persisted. In 1897, the feisty Irish-born Mary Harris Jones, known as Mother Jones, persuaded coal miners in Pennsylvania to join the United Mine

Homestead Strike Company lock-out that sparked a strike and violence at a Carnegie steel plant in 1892

Eugene V. Debs Union organizer, arrested as leader of the striking National Railway Union; would become a Socialist leader

Workers of America. By 1900, their numbers had climbed to 300,000. However, despite the achievements of the United Mine Workers, the successive attempts by the National Labor Union, Knights of Labor, American Federation of Labor, and American Railway Union to build a national working-class labor movement achieved only limited success. Ineffective in the political arena, blocked by state officials, divided by ethnic differences, harassed by employers, and frustrated by court decisions, American unions failed to expand their base of support. Post-Civil War labor turmoil had given it a negative public image that it would not shed until the 1930s.

Social Thinkers Probe for Alternatives

Widespread violence sparked a new debate over the social meaning of the new industrial order. At stake was a larger issue: Should government become the mechanism for helping the poor and regulating big business?

Defenders of capitalism preached the *laissez-faire* (**LESS-ay fare**), or “hands-off,” argument, insisting that government should never attempt to control business. In his essay “The Gospel of Wealth” (1889), Andrew Carnegie justified *laissez-faire* by applying the evolutionary theories of British social scientist Herbert Spencer to human society. “The law of competition,” Carnegie argued, “may be sometimes hard for the individual, [but] it is best for the race, because it insures the survival of the fittest in every department.”

Yale professor **William Graham Sumner** shared Carnegie’s disapproval of government interference. His combative book *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (1883) applied the evolutionary theories of British naturalist Charles Darwin to human society. In an early statement of what became known as **Social Darwinism**, Sumner asserted that inexorable natural laws controlled the social order. The state, declared Sumner, owed its citizens nothing but law, order, and basic political rights. As to the question of whether society should help the less fortunate, Sumner wrote famously: “A drunkard in the gutter is just where he ought to be.”

Sumner’s argument did not go unchallenged. In *Dynamic Sociology* (1883), Lester Frank Ward, a geologist, argued that contrary to Sumner’s claim, the supposed “laws” of nature could be circumvented by human will. Just as scientists had applied their knowledge to breeding superior livestock, government experts could use the power of the state to protect society’s weaker members and prevent the heedless exploitation of natural resources.

Other social theorists offered more utopian solutions to the problems of poverty and social unrest. Henry George, a self-taught San Francisco newspaper editor and economic theorist, proposed to solve the nation’s uneven distribution of wealth through what he called the single tax. In *Progress and Poverty* (1879), he argued that land should be taxed and the funds used to ameliorate the misery caused by industrialization. George’s program was so popular that he only narrowly missed being elected mayor of New York in 1886.

The vision of a harmonious industrialized society was vividly expressed in the utopian novel *Looking Backward* (1888) by the Massachusetts newspaper editor Edward Bellamy. Cast as a glimpse into the future, Bellamy’s novel envisioned a completely centralized, state-run economy and a prosperous society in which everyone works for the common welfare. Bellamy’s vision so inspired middle-class Americans

William Graham Sumner

Tough-minded Yale professor and theorist of Social Darwinism

Social Darwinism Theory that “survival of the fittest” competition benefits society by weeding out the unfit

Marxism Belief that capitalism would inevitably destroy itself in a violent class struggle, thus paving the way for classless, communist utopia

fearful of corporate power and working-class violence that nearly five hundred local Bellamyite organizations, called Nationalist clubs, sprang up to try to turn his dream into reality.

Ward, George, and Bellamy did not deny the benefits of the existing industrial order; they simply sought to humanize it. These utopian reformers envisioned a harmonious society whose members all worked together.

Marxist socialists advanced a different view. Elaborated by the German philosopher and radical agitator Karl Marx (1818–1883) in *Das Kapital* (dass cop-ee-TALL) (1867) and other works, **Marxism** rested on the labor theory of value: a proposition that the labor required to produce a commodity was the only true measure of that commodity's value. Any profit made by the capitalist employer was “surplus value” appropriated from the exploited workers. The essence of modern history, according to Marx, was the class struggle between the bourgeoisie (capitalists) and the impoverished proletariat (the workers). The eventual victors of this revolutionary struggle, according to Marx, would be the workers. Their triumph would usher in a classless, communist utopia in which the state would “wither away” and all exploitation would cease.

Despite Marx's keen interest in the United States, Marxism proved to have little appeal in late-nineteenth-century America other than for a tiny group of primarily German-born immigrants. More alarming to the public at large was the handful of anarchists, again mostly immigrants, who rejected Marxist discipline and preached the destruction of capitalism, the violent overthrow of the state, and the immediate introduction of a stateless utopia. In 1892 an anarchist attempted to assassinate Henry Clay Frick, the manager of Andrew Carnegie's Homestead Steel Works. His act confirmed the business stereotype of “labor agitators” as lawless and violent.

CHECKING IN

- Early organizers attempted to create all-encompassing unions, such as the National Labor Union, with grand political aims.
- The Knights of Labor, which welcomed all workers, enjoyed considerable success but eventually fizzled.
- The more tightly focused craft union movement under AFL leader Samuel Gompers prospered by concentrating on lunchbox issues like wages.
- Violence, such as the Haymarket Square riot, turned many Americans against labor unions and made the use of violence against them seem acceptable.
- Ideas like Social Darwinism and the Gospel of Wealth clashed with the beliefs of those who criticized industrial society's excesses.

Chapter Summary

How did Carnegie, Rockefeller, and other corporate leaders consolidate control over their industries? (page 423)

Abundant resources and technological innovation combined with other factors to fuel industrial growth. Railroads pioneered new business techniques; Carnegie, Rockefeller, and others successfully transferred these techniques to other industries, such as steel and oil. Pools were created to limit competition but were replaced by more efficient trusts and, ultimately, holding companies, leading to huge corporations.

KEY TERMS

Jay Gould (p. 424)
 Interstate Commerce Act (p. 426)
 J. Pierpont Morgan (p. 426)
 Andrew Carnegie (p. 426)
 vertical integration (p. 426)
 John D. Rockefeller (p. 427)
 Standard Oil Trust (p. 427)

What innovations in technology and business drove increases in industrial production after 1865? (page 428)

Technology contributed new ways of manufacturing as well as new products to stimulate growth. Many inventions, such as the telephone and electric light bulb, changed daily life. Advertising and marketing stimulated demand for the growing output of products.

Why did the South's experience with industrialization differ from that of the North and the Midwest? (page 432)

Lack of capital and a poor education system hamstrung southern development. Major growth came with the establishment of cotton textile mills and a handful of heavy industries, such as steel, but the South lagged far behind the rest of the nation.

How did the changing nature of work affect factory workers' lives, and how did they respond? (page 434)

Factory work depended on unskilled workers who performed mind-numbing routine tasks, often hazardous, for low pay. Immigrants became the mainstay of the industrial work force, but children as young as eight worked in coal mines and cotton mills. Women worked out of their homes and entered both the factory and the office work force.

How did corporate executives undercut labor's bargaining power in the 1890s? (page 439)

Workers tried to create all-encompassing structures, such as the National Labor Union and the Knights of Labor, to protect workers' rights, but these attempts failed. The American Federation of Labor, focusing on skilled workers and practical issues, was far more successful. Violence flared when used by strikers and strikebreakers alike; governments generally were also willing to use violence against strikes. Social Darwinism and the Gospel of Wealth were attempts to explain and justify the harshness of the new industrial order, although a number of utopian thinkers, notably Marxists and anarchists, protested.

KEY TERMS continued

Sherman Anti-Trust Act (p. 428)

Thomas A. Edison (p. 429)

Henry W. Grady (p. 432)

Horatio Alger (p. 438)

wildcat strikes (p. 439)

National Labor Union (NLU)
(p. 439)

Knights of Labor (p. 440)

American Federation of Labor
(AFL) (p. 440)

Samuel Gompers (p. 441)

Homestead Strike (p. 442)

Eugene V. Debs (p. 442)

William Graham Sumner (p. 443)

Social Darwinism (p. 443)

Marxism (p. 444)



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Immigration, Urbanization, and Everyday Life

CHAPTER 19

1860–1900

CHAPTER PREVIEW

The New American City

How did the influx of immigrants before 1900 create an awareness of ethnic and class differences?

Middle- and Upper-Class Society and Culture

How did Victorian morality shape middle-class society and culture?

Reforming the Working Class

How did social and religious reformers address urban poverty?

Working-Class Leisure in the Immigrant City

How did the urban working class change attitudes toward leisure and recreation by 1900?

Cultures in Conflict

How did writers, artists, and educational reformers address issues of cultural conflict?



Courtesy of George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film

Backyard Baseball, Boston, 1906, by Lewis Hine

Scott Joplin Black composer who gained great popularity with a playful new musical style called ragtime.

In a sweltering day in August 1899, **Scott Joplin**, a young black pianist, signed an unusual contract with his music publisher. Instead of receiving the usual one-time fee for his new composition, “Maple Leaf Rag,” Joplin would earn one cent for every copy sold. The contract signaled a new era in the popular music industry. Over the next two decades, “Maple

Leaf Rag” would sell more than half a million copies a year and make Joplin the king of ragtime, the syncopated dance music that had become a national sensation.

Joplin published more than seventy-five songs or piano rags before 1917. But his success was undercut by white competitors who

stereotyped his compositions as “Negro music” and “Coon songs.” His publishers refused to accept his classical compositions, including his opera *Treemonisha*. Opera was considered a high art form for the upper classes; blacks could not enter the field. As Joplin’s experience revealed, racial discrimination could reinforce the barriers of social class.

Joplin’s thwarted dreams were similar to those of countless others who tried to move up the economic ladder. American society was slowly shifting from a rural producer economy that stressed work and thrift to an urban consumer economy in which new forms of entertainment, leisure activities, and material possessions were becoming the hallmarks of personal identity. These changes, together with the expansion of salaried, white-collar occupations such as teaching and accounting, fostered growing class awareness.

Nowhere were class divisions more visible than in the cities crowded with immigrants, where the working class created its own vigorous culture of dance halls, saloons, vaudeville theaters, social clubs, and amusement parks. Middle-class reformers who strove to remake this working-class culture into their own image of propriety were soon frustrated. In the long run, the culture of the masses would prove more influential in shaping modern America.

THE NEW AMERICAN CITY

How did the influx of immigrants before 1900 create an awareness of ethnic and class differences?

Everyday life was transformed most dramatically and visibly in cities. Between 1870 and 1900 New Orleans’s population nearly doubled, Buffalo’s tripled, and Chicago’s increased more than fivefold. By 1900, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago all had more than a million residents, and 40 percent of all Americans lived in cities (see Table 19.1).

This spectacular urban growth, fueled by migration from the countryside and the arrival of nearly 11 million immigrants between 1870 and 1900, stimulated economic development. Like the frontier, the city symbolized opportunity for all comers.

The city’s unprecedented scale and diversity threatened traditional expectations of community life and social stability. Rural America had been a place of face-to-face personal relations. In contrast, the city was a seething caldron where immigrant groups contended with one another and with native-born Americans for jobs, power, and influence. Moreover, rapid growth strained city services, generating terrible housing and sanitation problems.

Native-born American city-dwellers complained about the noise, stench, and congestion of this transformed cityscape. They fretted about the newcomers’ squalid tenements, fondness for drink, and strange social customs. When native-born reformers set about cleaning up the city, they sought not only to improve the physical environment but also to destroy the distinctive customs that made immigrant cultures different from their own. The late nineteenth century thus witnessed an intense struggle to control the city and to benefit from its economic and cultural potential.

TABLE 19.1 URBAN GROWTH: 1870–1900

CITY	1870 POPULATION	1900 POPULATION	PERCENT INCREASE
Boston	250,525	560,892	123.88
Chicago	298,977	1,698,575	468.12
Los Angeles	5,728	102,479	1,689.08
Milwaukee	71,440	285,315	299.37
New Orleans	191,418	287,104	49.98
New York	1,478,103	3,437,202	132.54
Philadelphia	647,022	1,293,697	99.94
Pittsburgh	86,076	321,616	273.64
Portland	8,293	90,426	990.38
Richmond	51,038	85,050	66.64
San Francisco	149,473	342,782	129.32
Seattle	1,107	237,194	21,326.73

Source: *Thirteenth Census of the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913).

Migrants and Immigrants

The concentration of industries in urban settings produced demands for thousands of new workers. The promise of good wages and a broad range of jobs drew men and women from the countryside. So great was the migration from rural areas, especially New England, that some farm communities vanished from the map.

Young farmwomen led the exodus to the cities. With the growing mechanization of farming in the late nineteenth century, farming was increasingly male work. Rising sales of factory-produced goods through nationally distributed mail-order catalogs reduced the need for rural women's labor. Therefore, young farmwomen flocked to the cities, where they competed for jobs with immigrant, black, and city-born white women.

From 1860 to 1890, the prospect of a better life also attracted nearly 10 million northern European immigrants to American cities. Their numbers included 3 million Germans; 2 million English, Scottish, and Welsh; and 1.5 million Irish. By 1900, more than 800,000 French-Canadians had entered the New England mills, and close to a million Scandinavian newcomers had put down roots in the rich farmlands of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

In the 1890s, these earlier immigrants from northern and western Europe were joined by swelling numbers of “**new immigrants**”—Italians, Slavs, Greeks, and Jews from southern and eastern Europe, Armenians from the Middle East, and, in Hawaii, Japanese from Asia. In the next three decades, these new immigrants, many from peasant backgrounds, would boost America's foreign-born population by more than 18 million.

The overwhelming majority of both old and new immigrants settled in cities in the northeastern and north-central states. The effect of their numbers was

new immigrants Wave of immigrants after 1880 coming mainly from southern and eastern Europe



Chronology

1865	Vassar College founded
1869	First intercollegiate football game
1872	Anthony Comstock founds New York Society for the Suppression of Vice
1873	John Wanamaker opens his Philadelphia department store
1876	National League of baseball organized
1880	William Booth's followers establish an American branch of the Salvation Army
1881	Josephine Shaw Lowell founds New York Charity Organization Society (COS)
1884	Mark Twain, <i>Huckleberry Finn</i>
1889	Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr open Hull House
1891	University of Chicago founded; basketball invented at Springfield College, Massachusetts
1892	Ellis Island Immigration Center opened; General Federation of Women's Clubs organized
1895	Coney Island amusement parks open in Brooklyn, New York
1899	Scott Joplin, "Maple Leaf Rag"; Kate Chopin, <i>The Awakening</i> ; Thorstein Veblen, <i>The Theory of the Leisure Class</i>
1900	Theodore Dreiser, <i>Sister Carrie</i> ; National Association of Colored Women's Clubs organized
1910	Angel Island Immigration Center opens in San Francisco

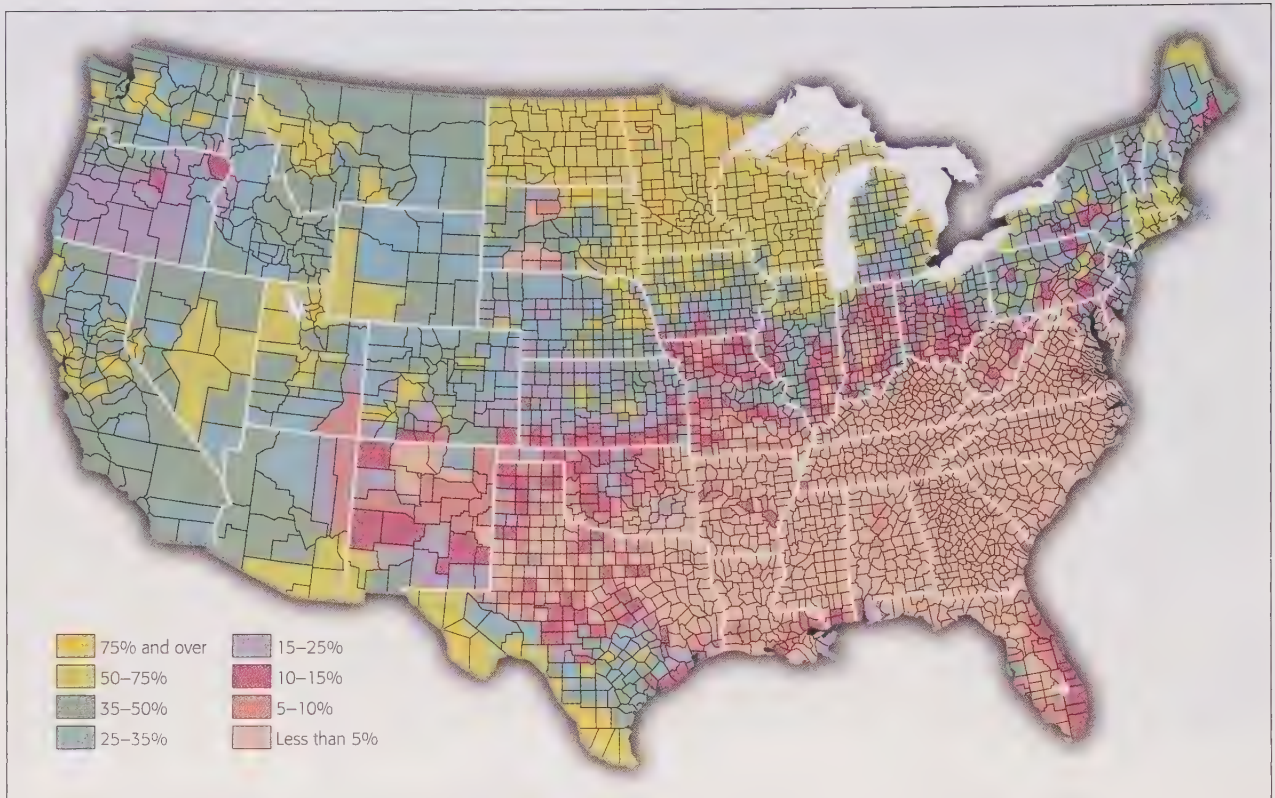
staggering. In 1890 New York City contained twice as many Irish as Dublin, as many Germans as Hamburg, half as many Italians as Naples, and two and a half times the Jewish population of Warsaw. Four out of five people in New York City had been born abroad or were children of foreign-born parents (see Map 19.1).

Overpopulation, crop failure, famine, religious persecution, or industrial depression had driven some of these immigrants from their homelands. At the same time, the promise of high wages lured more than 100,000 Japanese to work on Hawaiian sugar plantations. Many people, especially single young men, immigrated in the belief that the United States held a better future than their homeland. Wives and children waited in the old country until the family breadwinner had secured a job and saved enough money to pay for their passage to America.

The transatlantic journey, cramped and often stormy, featured poor food, little privacy, and rudimentary sanitary facilities. Immigrants arrived tired, fearful, and in some cases sick. Then customs officials examined them for physical handicaps and contagious diseases. After 1892, those with "loathsome" infections such as leprosy or a sexually transmitted disease were refused admittance and deported. Immigrants who passed the physical examination had their names recorded. If a customs official had difficulty pronouncing a foreign name, he often Anglicized it. One German Jew became flustered when asked for his name and mumbled, "Schoyn vergessen [I forget]." The inspector, who did not know Yiddish, wrote, "Sean Ferguson."


In 1892, the federal government built a new immigration facility on **Ellis Island** in New York harbor. Angel Island in San Francisco Bay on the West Coast served a similar purpose after 1910. At the immigrant processing centers, America's newest residents exchanged foreign currency for U.S. dollars, purchased railroad tickets, and

Ellis Island Immigrant processing center in New York City harbor through which millions passed



Map 19.1 Percent of Foreign-Born Whites and Native Whites of Foreign or Mixed Parentage in Total Population, by Counties, 1910

As this map indicates, new immigrants rarely settled in the South.

 **Interactive Map**

arranged lodgings. Those who arrived with enough cash, including many Germans and Scandinavians, commonly traveled west to Chicago, Milwaukee, and the rolling prairies beyond. Most of the Irish, and later the Italians, remained in eastern cities like Boston, New York, and Philadelphia.

Adjusting to an Urban Society

In the cities, immigrants tended to cluster together to ease the transition to life in a new society. In 1890 a reporter observed that, if a map of New York City's streets were colored in by nationality, it "would show more stripes than on the skin of a zebra, and more colors than any rainbow."

Some immigrant groups adjusted more easily than others. Skilled workers and those familiar with Anglo-American customs had relatively few problems. Ethnic groups that formed a substantial percentage of a city's population also had a major advantage. The Irish of Boston, New York, and Chicago, as well as the Germans of Milwaukee, dominated Democratic Party politics and controlled the hierarchy of the

Catholic church. Because of their success, upwardly mobile Irish became known as “lace curtain” Irish, a reference to their adoption of middle-class ideals.

The domination of urban institutions by one immigrant group, however, often made adjustment to American society more difficult for others. English and German dominance of the building trades, for example, enabled those nationalities to limit the numbers of Italians hired. Also, not all immigrants intended to remain in the United States. Expecting only a brief stay, some made little effort to learn English or understand American customs. Of the Italians who immigrated to New York before 1914, nearly 50 percent went back to Italy.

However, most immigrants stayed. As the number of foreigners in U.S. cities ballooned toward the turn of the century, all immigrant groups faced increasing hostility from white native-born Americans who disliked the newcomers’ social customs and worried about their growing influence. Fearing the loss of the privileges and status that were associated with their white skin color, native-born whites often stigmatized immigrants as racially different and inferior. Only gradually, and with much effort, did Irish, Jews, Slavs, and Italians come to be considered “white.”

Slums and Ghettos

Every major city had run-down, overcrowded slum neighborhoods, created when landlords subdivided old buildings and packed in too many residents. The poorer the renters, the worse the slums. Slums became ghettos when laws, prejudice, and community pressure prevented inhabitants from moving out. During the 1890s, Italians in New York City, blacks in Philadelphia and Chicago, Mexicans in Los Angeles, and Chinese in San Francisco increasingly became locked into segregated ghettos.

Life in the slums was particularly difficult for children. Juvenile diseases, such as whooping cough, measles, and scarlet fever, took a fearful toll, and infant mortality was high. In one immigrant ward in Chicago in 1900, 20 percent of infants died in their first year.

Because tenements often bordered industrial districts, residents had to put up with the noise, pollution, and foul odors of foundries, factories, and packing houses. Coal-fired steam engines and apartment house furnaces produced vast quantities of soot and dust that tinged the atmosphere a hazy gray and coated buildings with a grimy patina.

Most immigrants stayed in the shabbiest tenements only until they could afford better housing. Blacks, in contrast, were trapped in segregated districts. Driven out of the skilled trades and excluded from most factory work, blacks took menial jobs whose low pay left them little income for housing. Racist city-dwellers used high rents, real-estate covenants (agreements not to rent or sell to blacks), and neighborhood pressure to exclude them from areas inhabited by whites. Nevertheless, as **W. E. B. Du Bois**, a black sociologist, pointed out in *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), wealthy black entrepreneurs within these neighborhoods built their own churches, ran successful businesses, and established charitable organizations to help their people.

W. E. B. Du Bois Black sociologist, later one of the founders of the NAACP

Fashionable Avenues and Suburbs

The same cities that harbored slums, suffering, and violence also boasted neighborhoods of dazzling opulence. The wealthy built monumental residences on exclusive

thoroughfares just outside the downtown, among them Fifth Avenue in New York, Commonwealth Avenue in Boston, and Euclid (YOO-clid) Avenue in Cleveland.

In the 1870s and 1880s, those who could afford it began moving to nearby suburbs. Promoters of the suburban ideal contrasted the rolling lawns and stately houses on the city's periphery with the teeming streets, noisy saloons, and mounds of garbage and horse excrement downtown. Soon, many major cities could boast of their own stylish suburbs.

CHECKING IN

- From 1870 to 1900, 11 million immigrants flooded into American cities.
- Native-born Americans disliked and feared these “new immigrants.”
- The majority of immigrants crammed into tenements and slums.
- Wealthy city-dwellers created fashionable avenues as havens, while the middle class moved to the suburbs.
- These physical changes in cities created a new awareness of cultural and class differences.

Middle-class city-dwellers followed the precedents set by the wealthy. Skilled artisans, shopkeepers, clerks, accountants, and sales personnel moved either to new developments at the city's edge or to outlying suburban communities. Lawyers, doctors, small businessmen, and other professionals moved farther out along the main thoroughfares served by the street railway and purchased homes with large lots.

A pattern of informal residential segregation by income took shape in the cities and suburbs. Built for families of a particular income level, certain city neighborhoods and suburbs developed remarkably similar internal standards for lot size and house design. Commuters who rode the new street railways out from the city center could identify the changing neighborhoods along the way as readily as a geologist might distinguish different strata on a washed-out riverbank. And with the physical change in American cities came a new awareness of class and cultural disparities.

MIDDLE- AND UPPER-CLASS SOCIETY AND CULTURE

How did Victorian morality shape middle-class society and culture?

Spared the struggle for survival that confronted most Americans, society's middle and upper ranks faced a different challenge: how to rationalize their enjoyment of the products of the emerging consumer society. To justify the position of society's wealthiest members, ministers and advice-book writers appealed to **Victorian morality**, a set of social ideas influential among the privileged classes of England and America during the reign (1837–1901) of Britain's Queen Victoria.

Proponents of Victorian morality argued that the success of the middle and upper classes rested on their superior talent, intelligence, morality, and self-control. Women were identified as the driving force for moral improvement. While men were expected to engage in self-disciplined, “manly” dedication to the new industrial order, women would provide the gentle, elevating influence that would lead society in its upward march.

Victorian morality Strict code of gentility that permeated late-nineteenth-century society

Manners and Morals

Several fundamental assumptions shaped the Victorian worldview. First, human nature was malleable; people could improve themselves. Second, work had social value: Working hard not only developed self-discipline but also helped advance the progress of the nation. Finally, good manners and the cultivation of literature and art

ennobled society. Although these genteel assumptions were sometimes ignored, they were held up as universal standards.

Victorian morality stressed the importance of manners and social rituals. Behavior as well as income defined social standing. Good manners, including knowledge of dining and entertaining etiquette, and good posture became important marks of status. Meals became important rituals that differentiated the social classes. Meals presented occasions for displaying a family's proper manners and elaborate silver and china, regarded as symbols of refinement and sophistication.

The Victorian code—with its emphasis on morals, manners, and proper behavior—thus heightened the sense of class differences and created visible distinctions among social groups. Victorian Americans made bold claims about their interest in helping others improve themselves. More often than not, however, their self-righteous, intensely moralistic outlook simply widened the gap that income disparities had already opened.

The Cult of Domesticity

Victorian views on morality and culture, coupled with the need to make decisions about a mountain of domestic products, had a subtle but important impact on middle-class expectations about a woman's role within the home. From the 1840s onward, the home had been idealized as "the woman's sphere," a protected retreat where she could express her special maternal gifts, including a sensitivity toward children and an aptitude for religion.

During the 1880s and 1890s, Victorian advocates of the cult of domesticity added a new obligation to foster an artistic environment that would nurture her family's cultural improvement. Houses became statements of cultural aspiration with front parlors cluttered with artwork and curiosities. Excluded from the world of business and commerce, women directed their energy to transforming their homes into "a place of repose, a refuge from the excitement and distractions of outside . . . , provided with every attainable means of rest and recreation."

Not all middle-class women pursued this domestic ideal, however. For some, the drudgery of housework and of running the family overwhelmed any concern for artistic accomplishment. For others, the artistic ideal itself was not to their taste. In the 1880s and 1890s,



JUST BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS SATURDAY AFTERNOON ON SIXTH AVENUE, IN THE HEART OF THE WEST-SIDE SHOPPING DISTRICT, NEW YORK CITY.

New-York Historical Society

Saturday on Sixth Avenue, 1897

Large department stores, located on fashionable city avenues, turned shopping into a social activity that telegraphed one's social status. To return home, the wealthy took horse-drawn cabs rather than the elevated trains.

as women sought other outlets for their creative energies in settlement-house work, social reform, and women's club activities, the older domestic ideal began to unravel.

Department Stores

Although Victorian thought justified the privileges of the well-to-do, many people found it difficult to shake the thriftiness of their early years and accept the new preoccupation with accumulation and display. In the 1880s merchandisers encouraged Americans to loosen their purse strings and enjoy prosperity by emphasizing the high quality and low cost of their goods.

Department stores set the standard for consumption. In the final quarter of the nineteenth century, entrepreneurs like Roland Macy, John Wanamaker, and Marshall Field built giant department stores that transformed the shopping experience for their middle- and upper-class patrons. The merchants overcame reluctance to spend by advertising “rock-bottom” prices and by making shopping an exciting activity. Rapid turnover of merchandise created a sense of constant novelty. With stained-glass skylights, marble staircases, sparkling chandeliers, and plush carpets, the large urban department store functioned as a social club for comfortably fixed women. For those who could afford it, shopping became an adventure, a form of entertainment, and a way to affirm their place in society.

department store Emporium dedicated to convincing middle- and upper-class women that consumption was attractive and respectable

The Transformation of Higher Education

At a time when relatively few Americans possessed even a high-school education, colleges and universities represented another stronghold of the business and professional elite. Wealthy capitalists gained stature and a measure of immortality by endowing colleges and universities. Leland Stanford and his wife, Jane Lathrop

Stanford, launched Stanford University in 1885 with a bequest of \$24 million; John D. Rockefeller donated \$34 million to the University of Chicago in 1891. Industrialists and businessmen dominated the boards of trustees of most educational institutions.

The athletic field as well as the classroom prepared affluent young men for business and the professions. Football, adapted from English rugby, became an elite sport played by college teams. But the game, initially played without pads or helmets, was marred by violence. In 1905, eighteen students died of playing-field injuries. Many college presidents dismissed football as a dangerous waste of time and money, but eager alumni and coaches strongly defended the new sport. Some praised it as a character-building activity that could function as a surrogate frontier experience in an increasingly urbanized society. By 1900, collegiate football had become a popular fall ritual, and team captains were campus heroes.



Cigar-Box Label, c. 1910

Vassar College, founded in 1865, promoted the new image of womanhood by stressing the interconnections among education, athletics, and ethics.

Courtesy, The Winterthur Library; The John and Carolyn Grossman Collection

More than 150 new public, private, and religiously affiliated colleges and universities appeared between 1880 and 1900, and enrollments more than doubled. Coeducational private colleges and public universities enrolled increasing numbers of women. Some colleges—for instance, Vassar (1865) and Bryn Mawr (1884)—were founded solely for women. At these institutions, women developed the self-confidence to break with the Victorian ideal of passive womanhood and to compete with men by displaying strength, aggressiveness, and intelligence—popularly considered male attributes. By the turn of the century, women made up more than one-third of the total college-student population.

Innovative presidents such as Cornell's Andrew D. White and Harvard's Charles W. Eliot sought to change the focus of higher education. The change was most evident in medical education. Using the experimental method developed by German scientists, American medical professors insisted that all medical students be trained in biology, chemistry, and physics, including working in a laboratory. New educational and professional standards, similarly, were established for architects, engineers, and lawyers.

These changes were part of a larger transformation in higher education that produced a new institution, the **research university**. Unlike antebellum colleges, which focused on teaching Latin and Greek, theology, logic, and mathematics, the new research universities offered courses in a wide variety of subjects, established professional schools, and encouraged faculty members to pursue basic research. At Cornell, the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Johns Hopkins, Harvard, and other institutions, this conception of higher education laid the groundwork for the central role that U.S. universities would play in the intellectual, cultural, and scientific life of the twentieth century.

research university New type of school offering a wide variety of subjects, encouraging research

CHECKING IN

- The middle class adopted upper-class Victorian attitudes that focused on morality and social convention.
- The “cult of domesticity” shaped the lives of middle-class women, who were expected to focus on the home and its cultural refinement.
- Department stores catered to the middle and upper classes, and made shopping attractive and respectable.
- Football became the dominant college sport because it was thought to build character.
- Higher education flourished; new coeducational policies allowed women to acquire college education as never before; the research university emerged.

REFORMING THE WORKING CLASS

How did social and religious reformers address urban poverty?

The contrast between the affluent world of the college-educated middle and upper classes and the gritty lives of the working class was graphically displayed in the nation's growing urban centers. If department stores furnished new social spaces for the middle and upper classes, saloons became the poor man's club, and dance halls became single women's home away from home. The rich and the well-born looked askance at lower-class recreational activities and sought to force the poor to change their ways. But working-class Americans fought to preserve their own way of life. Indeed, the late nineteenth century witnessed an ongoing battle to eradicate social drinking and curb lower-class recreational activities.

Battling Poverty

Stunned by the levels of poverty and suffering in the expanding industrial cities, middle-class city leaders sought comprehensive solutions. Jacob Riis and the first generation of reformers believed that immigrants' lack of self-discipline and their

unsanitary living conditions caused their problems. Only later would Jane Addams, Florence Kelley, and other settlement-house workers examine the crippling impact of low wages and dangerous working conditions. Humanitarians often turned their campaigns to help the destitute into missions to Americanize the immigrants and eliminate customs that they perceived as offensive and self-destructive.

Poverty relief workers first targeted their efforts at the young, who were considered the most malleable. Early Protestant social reformers started charitable societies to help transient youths and street waifs. In 1843 Robert M. Hartley founded the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor to help poor families. Hartley's voluntaristic approach was supplemented by the more coercive tactics of Charles Loring Brace, who founded the New York Children's Aid Society in 1853. Worried that they might join the city's "dangerous classes," Brace swept orphaned children off the streets, shipped them to the country, and placed them with families to work as farm hands.

Whereas Brace gave adolescents an alternative to living in the slums, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) provided housing and wholesome recreation for country boys and young women who had migrated to the city. Both organizations subjected their members to curfews and expelled them for drinking and other forbidden behavior. By 1900, more than fifteen hundred YMCAs and YWCAs served as havens for nearly a quarter-million young men and women. But YMCA and YWCA leaders reached only a small portion of the young adult population. The strategy was too narrowly focused to stem the rising tide of urban problems.

New Approaches to Social Reform

The inability of relief organizations to cope with the explosive growth of the urban poor in the 1870s and 1880s convinced reformers to search for new allies. One effective

agency was the **Salvation Army**. A church established along pseudomilitary lines in England in 1865 by Methodist minister "General" William Booth, the Salvation Army sent its uniformed volunteers to the United States in 1880 to provide food, shelter, and temporary employment for families. The army's strategy was simple. Attract the poor with marching bands and lively preaching; follow up with offers of food, assistance, and employment; and then teach them the solid, middle-class virtues of temperance, hard work, and self-discipline.

New York's Charity Organization Society (COS), founded in 1882 by Josephine Shaw Lowell, implemented a similar approach to poor relief. The society sent "friendly visitors," who were trained, salaried women, into the tenements to counsel families on how to improve their lives. Convinced that moral deficiencies lay at the root of poverty, and that the "promiscuous charity" of overlapping welfare agencies undermined the desire to work, the COS tried to foster self-sufficiency in its charges.

Critics justly accused the COS and similar groups of seeking more to control than to help the poor. One of the manuals, for example, stressed the importance of introducing "messy housekeepers" to the "pleasures of a cheery, well-ordered home." Unable to see slum problems from the vantage point of the poor, they failed, for the most part, in their underlying objective: to convert the poor to their own standards of morality and decorum.

Salvation Army Religious group established to aid the poor

The Moral Purity Campaign

Other reformers pushed for tougher measures against sin and immorality. In 1872 **Anthony Comstock**, a pious young dry-goods clerk, founded the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. The organization demanded that municipal authorities close down gambling and lottery operations and censor obscene publications.

Nothing symbolized the contested terrain between middle- and lower-class culture better than the fight over prostitution, considered socially degenerate to some and a source of recreation to others. After the Civil War, the number of brothels expanded rapidly. In the 1880s, saloons and cabarets hired prostitutes of their own. Even though immigrant women do not appear to have made up the majority of big-city prostitutes, reformers often labeled them as the major source of the problem.

In 1892, New York Presbyterian minister Charles Parkhurst founded the City Vigilance League to clean up prostitution, gambling dens, and saloons. Parkhurst blamed the “slimy, oozy soil of Tammany Hall” (the Democratic organization that dominated New York City politics, discussed in the next chapter) and the New York City police for the city’s rampant evil. He pressured city officials to enforce the laws against prostitution, gambling, and Sunday liquor sales.

However, the purity campaign quickly fell apart. New York’s population was too large and its ethnic constituencies too diverse for the middle and upper classes to curb all the illegal activities flourishing within the sprawling metropolis.

Anthony Comstock Leader of the moral purity crusade against urban vice and corruption

The Social Gospel

In the 1870s and 1880s, a handful of Protestant ministers who were appalled by slum conditions took a different approach to helping impoverished city-dwellers. These ministers argued that the rich and the well-born had a Christian responsibility to do something about urban poverty.

William S. Rainsford, the Irish-born minister of New York City’s St. George’s Episcopal Church, pioneered the so-called institutional church movement. Large downtown churches in once-elite districts that had been overrun by immigrants would provide their new neighbors with social services as well as a place to worship. With the financial help of J. Pierpont Morgan, a warden of his church, Rainsford organized a boys’ club, built recreational facilities on the Lower East Side, and established an industrial training program.

Other Protestant ministers, led by Washington Gladden, a Congregational clergyman in Columbus, Ohio, launched the **Social Gospel** movement in the 1870s. Gladden insisted that true Christianity commits men and women to fight social injustice. Walter Rauschenbusch, a minister in New York City’s notorious Hell’s Kitchen neighborhood, refined this nostrum into a coherent philosophy. Educated in Germany, Rauschenbusch argued that a truly Christian society would unite all churches, reorganize the industrial system, and work for international peace. Although the Social Gospel attracted only a handful of Protestants, their earnest voices blended with a growing chorus of critics bemoaning the nation’s urban woes.

Social Gospel Protestant doctrine that wealthy must aid the poor



Garbage Box, First Ward, Chicago, c. 1900

Lacking space for recreation, immigrant children play atop garbage boxes in crowded alleys. Concerned for their health, Jane Addams wrote that “this slaughter of innocents, this infliction of suffering on the new-born, is so gratuitous and so unfair, that it is only a question of time until an outraged sense of justice shall be aroused on behalf of these children.”

Jane Addams Leader in settlement-house movement; later won the Nobel Peace Prize

The Settlement-House Movement

In the 1880s, a younger generation of charity workers led by **Jane Addams** developed a new weapon against destitution: the settlement house. Like the Social Gospelers, these reformers recognized that the hardships of slum life were often beyond the individual’s control. Living in the poor neighborhoods where they worked, they could see firsthand “the struggle for existence, which is so much harsher among people near the edge of pauperism.”

The youngest daughter of a successful Illinois businessman, Jane Addams purchased a dilapidated mansion in Chicago in 1889 and opened it as Hull House, the first experiment in the settlement-house approach. Putting the middle-class ideal of true womanhood into action, Addams and her colleague Ellen Gates Starr turned Hull House into a social center for recent immigrants. She invited them to plays; sponsored art projects; held classes in English, civics, cooking, and dressmaking; and encouraged them to preserve their traditional crafts. She set up a kindergarten, a laundry, an employment bureau, and a day nursery for working mothers. Addams and her coworkers made studies of city housing conditions and pressured politicians to enforce sanitation regulations.

By 1895, at least fifty settlement houses had opened around the nation. Settlement-house leaders trained a generation of young college students, mostly women, many of whom would later serve as state and local government officials. Florence Kelley, for example, who had worked at Hull House, became the chief factory inspector for Illinois in 1893. Through their sympathetic attitudes toward the immigrants and their systematic publication of data about slum conditions, settlement-house workers gave Americans new hope that the cities' problems could be overcome.

But in their attempt to promote class cooperation and social harmony, settlement houses had mixed success. Although immigrants appreciated the settlement houses' resources and activity, they widely felt that the reformers cared little for increasing immigrant political power. "They're like the rest," complained one immigrant, "a bunch of people planning for us and deciding what is good for us without consulting us or taking us into their confidence."

CHECKING IN

- The first generation of urban reformers blamed weak moral discipline for the plight of the poor; with this focus, reformers ignored the issues of low wages and dangerous working conditions.
- The Salvation Army and other reform groups provided needed aid and tried to improve moral character by instilling middle-class values.
- The Social Gospel taught the responsibility of the rich and well-born to help the poor and fight injustice.
- Settlement houses brought middle-class women into the slums to provide services and attack urban problems.

WORKING-CLASS LEISURE IN THE IMMIGRANT CITY

How did the urban working class change attitudes toward leisure and recreation by 1900?

In colonial America, preachers had warned against leisure and idleness as temptations to sin. In the rural culture of the early nineteenth century, the unremitting routines of farm labor had left little time for relaxation. Family picnics, horse races, county fairs, revivals, and holidays like the Fourth of July and Christmas had provided permissible diversion. But most Americans continued to view leisure activities skeptically.

As urban populations and factories multiplied after the Civil War, new patterns of leisure and amusement emerged, especially among the urban working class. After long hours in factories and mills or behind department store counters, working-class Americans craved relaxation and diversion. They thronged the streets, patronized saloons and dance halls, cheered at boxing matches and baseball games, and organized boisterous group picnics and holiday celebrations. Amusement parks, vaudeville theaters, sporting clubs, and racetracks provided further entertainment for workers, and mass leisure became a big business.

Streets and Saloons

No segment of the populace had a greater need for recreation than the urban working class. Hours of tedious, highly disciplined, and physically exhausting labor left workers tired but thirsty for excitement and escape from their cramped living quarters. In 1889 a banner carried by a carpenters' union summed up their wishes: "eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, and eight hours for what we will."

City streets provided recreation that anyone could afford. Relaxing after a day's work, shop girls and laborers clustered on busy corners, watching shouting pushcart

peddlers and listening to organ grinders play familiar melodies. For a penny or a nickel, they could buy a bagel, a baked potato, or a soda. In the summer, when the heat and humidity within the tenements reached unbearable levels, the streets became a hive of neighborhood social life.

The streets were open to all, but other leisure institutions drew mainly a male clientele. Saloons offered men companionship, conviviality, and five-cent beer, often with a free lunch thrown in. By 1900, New York City had an estimated ten thousand saloons. As neighborhood gathering places, saloons reinforced group identity and became centers for immigrant politics. Saloonkeepers often doubled as local ward bosses who performed small services for their patrons. With rich mahogany bars, shiny brass rails, and elegant mirrors, saloons provided patrons with a taste of high-toned luxury.

However, it would be a mistake to view the old-time saloon through a haze of sentimental nostalgia. Prostitution and crime flourished in the rougher saloons. Drunken husbands sometimes beat their wives and children, squandered their meager paychecks, and lost their jobs. The pervasiveness of alcoholism was devastating. Temperance reformers, in their attack on saloons, targeted a real and widespread social problem.

The Rise of Professional Sports

As an English game called rounders, baseball had existed since the seventeenth century. If Americans did not create baseball, they did turn it into a major professional sport. In 1845, the first organized baseball team, the New York Knickerbockers, was formed. In the 1860s, rules were codified and the sport assumed its modern form. Overhand pitches replaced underhand tosses. Fielders wore gloves, games were standardized at nine innings, and bases were spaced ninety feet apart.

In 1869, the Cincinnati Red Stockings, the first team to put its players under contract for the whole season, toured the country and ended the season with fifty-seven wins and no losses. Team owners organized the National League in 1876, took control from the players by requiring them to sign exclusive contracts, and limited each city to one professional team. Soon the owners were filling baseball parks with crowds of ten to twelve thousand fans and earning enormous profits. By the 1890s, baseball had become big business.

The working class in particular took the sport to heart. The most profitable teams were those in industrial cities with a large working-class population. However, if baseball helped build solidarity among some ethnic groups, it also fostered discrimination against blacks. At least fifty-five blacks played on integrated teams between 1883 and 1898. Increasingly thereafter, blacks were banned from playing on professional teams and banished to their own league.

Although no other organized sport attracted as large a following as baseball, horse racing and boxing also drew large crowds of spectators and bettors. Louisville's Kentucky Derby became an important social event for the rich, but professional boxing aroused more passionate devotion among laborers. Bare-knuckled prizefighting became a testing ground where men could demonstrate their toughness and physical prowess.

For many working-class Americans, heavyweight fighter **John L. Sullivan** personified these traits. Of Irish immigrant stock, Sullivan began boxing in 1877 at

John L. Sullivan Heavyweight
boxing champion

age nineteen. With his massive physique, handlebar mustache, and arrogant swagger, Sullivan was enormously popular among immigrants. Barnstorming across the country, he vanquished a succession of local strong men, invariably wearing his trademark green tights with an American flag wrapped around his middle. Yet, Sullivan refused to fight blacks, supposedly in deference to the wishes of his fans. This policy conveniently allowed him to avoid facing the finest boxer of the 1880s, the Australian black, Peter Jackson.

Vaudeville, Amusement Parks, and Dance Halls

In contrast to the male preserve of saloons and prize-fights, the world of vaudeville shows, amusement parks, and neighborhood dance halls welcomed all comers regardless of gender. Some of them proved particularly

congenial to working-class women.

Vaudeville (**VAWD-vill**) evolved out of antebellum minstrel shows that featured white comedians made up as blacks. The vaudeville show typically opened with an animal act or a dance number, followed by a musical interlude. Comic skits then ridiculed the trials of urban life, satirized police and municipal ineptitude, and poked fun at immigrant accents, mining a rich vein of ethnic humor and stereotypes. Blackface skits were sometimes included, thus reinforcing prejudice against blacks. After a highbrow operatic aria and acts by ventriloquists and magicians, the program ended with a “flash” finale featuring flying-trapeze artists or the like. By the 1880s vaudeville was drawing larger crowds than any other form of theater.

Whereas vaudeville offered psychological release from the stresses of working-class life, amusement parks provided physical escape. New York’s Coney Island evolved into an oceanfront resort for the masses in the 1870s. At Coney Island, young couples went dancing, rode through the dark Tunnel of Love, and sped down the dizzying roller coaster in Steeplechase Park. Customers were encouraged to surrender to the spirit of play and lose themselves in fantasy.

By the end of the nineteenth century, New York City had well over three hundred thousand female wage earners. For this army of low-paid young working women, amusement parks exerted a powerful lure. Here they could meet friends, spend time with young men beyond the watchful eyes of their parents, show off their new dresses, and try out the latest dance steps. For such women, the exciting music and the spell of a warm summer night could seem a magical release from the drudgery of daily life.

Ragtime

Nothing illustrated more sharply the differences between middle- and working-class culture than the contrasting styles of popular music they favored. Whereas the middle

class preferred hymns or songs that conveyed a moral lesson, the working class delighted in ragtime, the product of black musicians in the saloons and brothels of the South.

Ragtime developed out of the rich tradition of songs through which black Americans had eased the burdens of their lives. Like spirituals, ragtime used

CHECKING IN

- Saloons became political as well as social centers for immigrant men.
- Professional sports, particularly baseball, appealed strongly to urban immigrants.
- Boxing produced manly heroes like John L. Sullivan, the “Boston Strong Boy.”
- Vaudeville and dance halls provided cheap popular entertainment, and urban amusement parks like Coney Island attracted huge crowds.
- Ragtime brought black music into white communities even as it confirmed racial stereotypes.

syncopated rhythms and complex harmonies, but it blended them with marching-band musical structures to create a distinctive style. A favorite of “honky-tonk” piano players, ragtime was introduced to the broader public in the 1890s and became a national sensation.

The reasons for the sudden ragtime craze were complex. Inventive, playful, with catchy syncopations and an infectious rhythm in the bass clef, the music displayed an originality that had an appeal all its own. Part of ragtime’s popularity also came from its origin in brothels and its association with blacks, who were widely stereotyped in the 1890s as sexual, sensual, and uninhibited by the rigid Victorian social conventions that restricted whites. Hence, ragtime’s great popularity proved a mixed blessing for blacks. While it helped break down the barriers faced by blacks in the music industry, it also confirmed some whites’ stereotype of blacks as primitive and sensual, a bias that underlay the racism of the period and helped justify segregation and discrimination.

CULTURES IN CONFLICT

How did writers, artists, and educational reformers address issues of cultural conflict?

Even within the elite and middle classes, Victorian morality and genteel cultural standards were never totally accepted. As the century ended, increasing numbers of people questioned these beliefs. Women stood at the center of the era’s cultural turbulence. Thwarted by a restrictive code of feminine propriety, they made their dissatisfactions heard. The rise of women’s clubs, the growth of women’s colleges, and even the 1890s bicycle fad testified to the emergence of what some began to call the “new woman.”

In no period of American history have class conflicts been as open and raw. As middle-class leaders nervously eyed the sometimes disorderly culture of city streets, saloons, boxing clubs, dance halls, and amusement parks, they saw a challenge to their own cultural and social values. Some middle-class reformers promoted public schools as a means to impose middle-class values on the urban masses. Others battled urban “vice” and “immorality.” But ultimately it was the polite mores of the middle class, not urban working-class culture, that proved more vulnerable. By 1900 the Victorian social and moral ethos was crumbling on every front.

The Genteel Tradition and Its Critics

What was this genteel culture that aroused such opposition? In the 1870s and 1880s, a group of upper-class writers and editors, led by Charles Eliot Norton of Harvard and E. L. Godkin of *The Nation*, codified Victorian standards for literature and the arts with the goal of creating a coherent national artistic culture. Joining forces with editors and writers in Boston and New York, these elites lectured the middle class about the value of high culture and the insights to be gained from painting and music. They censored their own publications to remove all sexual allusions, disrespectful treatments of Christianity, and unhappy endings.

Although these genteel magazines provided an important forum for new authors, their editors' strident elitism and imperialistic desire to control national literary standards bred opposition. Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as **Mark Twain**, spoke for many young writers when he declared that he was through with "literature and all that bosh." Attacking aristocratic literary conventions, Twain and others who shared his concerns explored new forms of fiction and worked to broaden literature's appeal to the general public.

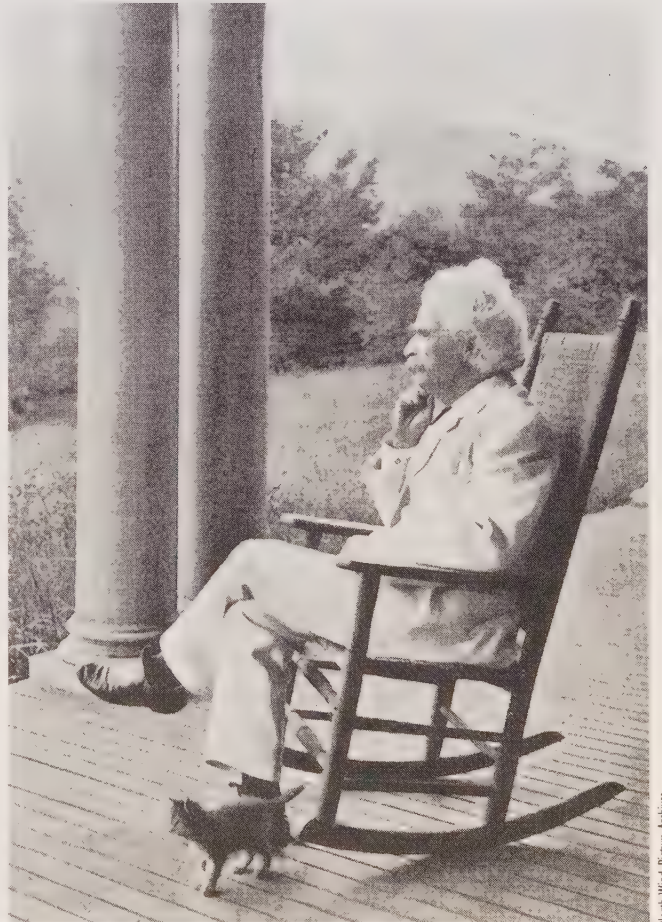
These efforts to chart new directions for American literature rested on fundamental changes taking place within the publishing industry. New magazines like *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *McClure's* competed with the elite publications. The new magazines slashed their prices and tripled their circulation. Supported by advertising rather than subscriptions, they provided an outlet for writers who could provide accurate depictions of the "whirlpool of real life."

Some of these writers have been called regionalists because they captured the distinctive dialects and details of their featured locale. Others, among them William Dean Howells, have been called realists because of their focus on the truthful depiction of the commonplace. Still others have been categorized as naturalists because their stories deny free will and stress the ways in which life's outcomes are determined by economic and psychological forces. Stephen Crane's *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* (1892), a bleak story of an innocent girl's exploitation and ultimate suicide in an urban slum, generally is considered the first naturalistic American novel. Labels aside, all these writers shared a skepticism about literary conventions and an intense desire to understand the society around them.

The careers of Mark Twain and Theodore Dreiser highlight the changes in the publishing industry and the evolution of new forms of writing. Both were products of the Midwest, outsiders to the East Coast literary establishment—Twain from Missouri and Dreiser from Indiana. As young men, both worked as newspaper reporters and traveled widely.

Drawing on their own experiences, Twain and Dreiser wrote about the human impact of the wrenching social changes taking place around them: the flow of people to the expanding cities and the relentless scramble for power, wealth, and fame. In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), Twain uses the river journey of two runaways, the rebellious Huck and the slave Jim, to explore the nature of contemporary American society by contrasting the idyllic life on the raft with the tawdry, fraudulent world of the small riverfront towns. Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900) traces the journey of Carrie Meeber, an innocent and

Mark Twain Writer, humorist, and critic of genteel tradition



Mark Twain

Twain not only broke from highbred literary standards but also created a unique personal style through his studied prose and distinctive attire.

attractive girl, from her Wisconsin farm home to Chicago. Seduced by a traveling salesman, Carrie moves in with the married proprietor of a fancy saloon. Driven by her desire for expensive department-store clothes and lavish entertainment, Carrie follows her married lover to New York, abandons him when his money runs out, and pursues her own career in the theater.

Twain and Dreiser broke sharply with the genteel tradition's emphasis on manners and decorum. As evidence, *Century* magazine readers complained that *Huckleberry Finn* was "destitute of a single redeeming quality." The publisher of *Sister Carrie* was so repelled by Dreiser's novel that he printed only a thousand copies (to fulfill the legal terms of his contract) and then stored them in a warehouse.

Growing numbers of scholars and critics challenged the certitudes of Victorian mores, including assumptions that moral worth and economic standing were closely linked and that the status quo represented a social order decreed by God and nature alike. Economist Thorstein Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) caustically critiqued the lifestyles of the new capitalist elite. Raised in a poor Norwegian farm community in Minnesota, Veblen looked at the captains of industry and their families with a jaundiced eye. He documented their "conspicuous consumption" and lamented the widening economic gap between "those who worked without profit" and "those who profited without working."

Within the new discipline of sociology, Annie MacLean exposed the exploitation of department-store clerks, Walter Wyckoff uncovered the hand-to-mouth existence of unskilled laborers, and W. E. B. Du Bois documented the hardships faced by blacks in Philadelphia. The publication of these writings, coupled with the economic depression and seething labor agitation of the 1890s, made it increasingly difficult for turn-of-the-century middle-class Americans to accept the smug, self-satisfied belief in progress and genteel culture that had been a hallmark of the Victorian outlook.

Modernism in Architecture and Painting

The challenge to the genteel tradition also found support among architects and painters. Architects followed the lead of Louis Sullivan, who argued that a building's form should follow its function. In this view, banks, for example, should look like financial institutions, not Greek temples. Striving to create functional American design standards, the Chicago architects looked for inspiration to the future—to **modernism**—not to the past.

The Chicago architect **Frank Lloyd Wright** designed "prairie-school" houses that represented a typical modernist break with past styles. Wright scorned the three-story Victorian house with its large attic and basement. His designs, which featured broad, sheltering roofs and horizontal silhouettes, used interconnecting rooms to create a sense of spaciousness. Modernism's rejection of Victorian refinement influenced late-nineteenth-century painting as well. Winslow Homer's watercolors pictured nature as brutally tough and unsentimental; in his grim, elemental seascapes, lone men struggle against overwhelming waves. Thomas Eakins's canvases of swimmers, boxers, and rowers captured moments of vigorous physical exertion. While Mary Cassatt shared Eakins's interest in everyday life, she often took as her subject the bond between mother and child, as in her painting *The Bath* (c. 1891).

modernism Trend in early twentieth-century thought and aesthetics that rejected Victorian formalism in favor of new modes of experience and expression

Frank Lloyd Wright Architect who rejected Victorian fussiness

The revolt by architects' and painters against Victorian standards was symptomatic of a larger shift in middle-class thought that resulted from fundamental economic changes. As one minister observed in 1898, the transition from muscle to mechanical power had "separated, as by an impassable gulf, the simple, homespun, individualistic world of the . . . past, from the complex, closely associated life of the present." Victorian platitudes about proper manners and graceful arts seemed out of place in the big, glittering, electrified cities of iron and glass.

Distrusting idealistic Victorian assumptions about social progress, the middle class nevertheless remained divided over how to replace them. Not until the Progressive Era would social reformers draw on new expertise in social research with an enlarged conception of the federal government's regulatory power to break sharply with their Victorian predecessors' social outlook.

From Victorian Lady to New Woman

The role of middle-class women in the revolt against Victorian refinement was complex and ambiguous. Dissatisfaction with the cult of domesticity did not necessarily lead to their open rebellion. Although they chafed against the constraints of the genteel code and the assumption that they should limit their activities to the home, many women remained committed to playing a nurturing role within the family. In fact, early advocates of a "widened sphere" for women often fused the traditional Victorian ideal of womanhood with a firm commitment to political action.

The career of temperance leader **Frances Willard** illustrates how the cult of domesticity could evolve into a broader view of women's social and political responsibilities. Willard believed that by nature women were compassionate, nurturing, and sensitive to others; she was equally convinced that drinking encouraged men to squander their earnings and profoundly threatened family life. In 1874, Willard resigned her positions as dean of women and professor of English at Northwestern University to devote her energies completely to the temperance cause. Five years later, she was elected president of the recently formed Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).

Willard took the traditional belief that women had unique moral virtues and transformed it into a rationale for political action. The domestication of politics, she asserted, would protect the family and improve public morality. She launched a crusade in 1880 to win the franchise for women so that they could outlaw liquor. Willard soon expanded the WCTU's activities to include welfare work, prison reform, labor arbitration, and public health. By 1890, the WCTU, with a membership of 150,000, had become the nation's first mass organization of women. Through it, women gained experience as lobbyists, organizers, and lecturers, in the process undercutting the assumption of "separate spheres."

An expanding network of women's clubs offered another means by which middle- and upper-class women could hone their skills in civic affairs, public speaking, and intellectual analysis. Club women became involved in social-welfare projects, public-library expansion, and tenement reform. By 1892, the General Federation of Women's Clubs boasted 495 affiliates and a hundred thousand members. Middle-class black women, excluded from many white clubs, formed their own National Association of Colored Women's Clubs in 1900.

Frances Willard Activist in temperance and women's issues



Bicycling and Courtship: Sheet Music, 1896

The bicycling fad not only allowed women to get outdoor exercise, but it also became a way for young women and men to meet away from the watchful eyes of parents.

Younger women challenged social conventions by joining the bicycling craze that swept urban America at the turn of the century. The fascination with bicycle riding developed as part of a new interest in health and physical fitness. Middle- and upper-class Americans explored various ways to improve their vigor. Some used health products such as cod-liver oil and sarsaparilla for “weak blood.” Others played basketball, invented in 1891 by a physical education instructor at Springfield College in Massachusetts to keep students in shape during the winter months.

Bicycling especially appealed to young women who had chafed under the restrictive Victorian attitudes about female exercise, which held that proper young ladies must never sweat and that the female body must be fully covered at all times. By pedaling along in a shirtwaist or “split” skirt, a woman bicyclist made an implicit feminist statement suggesting that she had broken with genteel conventions.

Changing attitudes about women’s proper role also found expression in gradually shifting ideas about marriage. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, a suffrage advocate and speaker for women’s rights, asserted that women would make an effective contribution to society only when they won economic

independence from men. One tangible indicator of women’s changing relationship to men was the substantial rise in the divorce rate. In 1880, one in every twenty-one marriages ended in divorce. By 1900, the rate had climbed to one in twelve. Women who brought suit for divorce increasingly cited their husbands’ failure to act responsibly and to respect their autonomy.

Women writers generally welcomed the new female commitment to independence and self-sufficiency. Mary Wilkins Freeman’s short stories, for example, compare women’s expanding role to the frontier ideal of freedom. Her characters fight for their beliefs without concern for society’s reaction. Feminist **Kate Chopin** pushed the debate to the extreme by having the married heroine of her 1899 novel *The Awakening* violate social conventions by falling in love with another man and then taking her life when his ideas about women prove as narrow and traditional as those of her husband.

Nonetheless, attitudes changed slowly. The enlarged concept of women’s role in society exerted its greatest influence on college-educated, middle-class women who

Kate Chopin Feminist author; plotlines of her novel *The Awakening* violated social conventions

had leisure time and could hope for success in journalism, social work, or nursing. For shop girls who worked sixty hours a week to make ends meet, the ideal remained a more distant goal.

Public Education as an Arena of Class Conflict

Controversy over the scope and function of public education engaged Americans of all socioeconomic levels and highlighted class and cultural divisions in late-nineteenth-century society. Viewing public schools as an instrument for indoctrinating and controlling the lower ranks, middle-class educators and civic leaders campaigned to expand and centralize public schooling. Not surprisingly, the reformers' efforts aroused considerable opposition from ethnic and religious groups whose outlook and interests differed sharply from theirs.

Thanks to the crusade for universal public education started by Horace Mann, most northern states had public-school systems by the time of the Civil War. More than half the nation's children received some formal education, but most attended only a few years, and few went to high school. In the 1870s, middle-class activists, concerned that many Americans lacked sufficient knowledge to participate wisely in public affairs or function effectively in the labor force, worked to increase the number of years spent in school.

One such reformer was federal commissioner of education William Torrey Harris. Harris urged teachers to instill in their students a sense of order, decorum, self-discipline, and civic loyalty. Believing that modern industrial society depended on citizens' conforming to the timetables of the factory and the train, he envisioned the schools as models of precise scheduling: "The pupil must have his lessons ready at the appointed time, must rise at the tap of the bell, move to the line, return; in short, go through all the evolutions with equal precision."

To achieve these goals and to wrest control of schools from neighborhood leaders and ward politicians, reform-minded educators like Harris stressed punctuality, compulsory-attendance laws, and a tenure system to insulate teachers from political favoritism and parental pressure. By 1900, thirty-one states required all children from eight to fourteen years of age to attend school. But the steamroller methods of Harris and others to systematize public education prompted protests. New York pediatrician Joseph Mayer Rice, after interviewing twelve hundred teachers, scornfully criticized the schools' reliance on singsong memorization and prisonlike discipline.

Rice overlooked real advances; for example, the national illiteracy rate dropped from 17 percent in 1880 to 13 percent by 1900, despite the influx of immigrants. He was on target, however, in assailing many teachers' rigid emphasis on silence, docility, and unquestioning obedience to rules.

By the 1880s, several different groups were opposing the centralized urban public-school bureaucracies. Working-class families that depended on their children's meager wages for survival, for example, resisted attempts to force their sons and daughters to attend school past the elementary grades. Although some immigrant families made great sacrifices to give their children an education, many withdrew their offspring from school as soon as they had learned the rudiments of reading and writing, and sent them to work.

CHECKING IN

- Cultural conflict pitted Victorian gentility against rowdier immigrant life.
- Mark Twain and Theodore Dreiser led the attack on Victorian literature.
- Louis Sullivan, Frank Lloyd Wright, and other architects and artists created “modernism.”
- Through new forms of political, creative, and physical expression, the “new woman” struggled to free herself from the bonds of genteel tradition.
- Public schools were increasingly seen as a way to inculcate middle-class values, although Catholics resisted.

Furthermore, Catholic immigrants objected to the overwhelmingly Protestant orientation of the public schools. Catholics set up separate parochial systems and denounced federal aid to public schools as a ploy to “form one homogeneous American people after the New England Evangelical type.” Meanwhile, upper-class parents who did not wish to send their children to immigrant-thronged public schools enrolled them in private seminaries and boarding schools, like St. Paul’s in Concord, New Hampshire. The proliferation of private and parochial schools, together with the controversies over compulsory education, school funding, and classroom decorum, reveals the extent to which public education had become mired in ethnic and class differences.

Unlike Germany and Japan, which centralized their national educational systems in the nineteenth century, the United States created a diverse system of locally run public and private institutions, a system that allowed each segment of society some influence over its schools. Amid the disputes, school enrollments dramatically expanded. In 1870, fewer than 72,000 students attended the nation’s 1,026 high schools. By 1900, the number of high schools had jumped to more than 5,000 and the number of students to more than 500,000.

Chapter Summary

How did the influx of immigrants before 1900 create an awareness of ethnic and class differences? (page 447)

A flood of immigrants jostled against native-born Americans who feared and disliked them; the immigrants were crowded into ghettos. The wealthy created fashionable enclaves, the middle class moved to the suburbs, and the physical changes in cities sharpened class awareness. To further distinguish themselves from these newcomers, native-born Americans stressed their commitment to Victorian morality.

How did Victorian morality shape middle-class society and culture? (page 452)

Victorian morality and its emphasis on gentility, manners, decorum, and self-control shaped the middle class. The cult of domesticity demanded that women maintain culturally refined homes. Lavish department stores and artistically designed houses reflected the middle- and upper-class faith that the consumption of material goods indicated good taste. To raise standards, the prosperous classes expanded the number of high schools and created a new research university system for training educators, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals.

KEY TERMS

Scott Joplin (p. 446)
 new immigrants (p. 448)
 Ellis Island (p. 449)
 W. E. B. Du Bois (p. 451)
 Victorian morality (p. 452)
 department store (p. 454)
 research university (p. 455)
 Salvation Army (p. 456)
 Anthony Comstock (p. 457)
 Social Gospel (p. 457)
 Jane Addams (p. 458)
 John L. Sullivan (p. 460)
 Mark Twain (p. 463)
 modernism (p. 464)
 Frank Lloyd Wright (p. 464)
 Frances Willard (p. 465)
 Kate Chopin (p. 466)

How did social and religious reformers address urban poverty?
(page 455)

While Jacob Riis, Jane Addams, and other reformers worked to improve overcrowded housing and dangerous working conditions, Anthony Comstock and other less sympathetic reformers attacked immigrant values and cultures in an effort to uplift and Americanize them.

How did the urban working class change attitudes toward leisure and recreation by 1900? (page 459)

Urban immigrants thronged saloons, dance halls, vaudeville theaters, and amusement parks. They listened avidly to ragtime and cheered on professional baseball teams and sports heroes such as boxer John L. Sullivan. The elite vision of sport as a vehicle for instilling self-discipline was transformed into a new commitment to sports as spectacle and entertainment. Sports had become big business and an important part of the new consumerism. As Victorian morality eroded, undermined by dissension from within and opposition from without, new standards of behavior and creative expression emerged.

How did writers, artists, and educational reformers address issues of cultural conflict? (page 462)

Genteel Victorianism found itself pitted against—and losing out to—immigrant rowdiness and spirit. Mark Twain and others challenged the “genteel tradition” in literature, while architects like Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright reshaped the urban landscape. Women struggled to escape the bonds of Victorian gentility. Public schools were seen as a place to inculcate middle-class values and overthrow immigrant culture. Despite these efforts, the raucous working-class culture of the late-nineteenth-century city can be seen as the seedbed of twentieth-century mass culture.



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

Politics and Expansion in an Industrializing Age

1877–1900

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Party Politics in an Era of Upheaval, 1877–1884

How did political parties build coalitions out of their diverse ethnic and regional constituencies?

Politics of Privilege, Politics of Exclusion, 1884–1892

What factors prompted the rise of the Grange and the Farmers' Alliance movements?

The 1890s: Politics in a Depression Decade

Why did William Jennings Bryan fail to win the presidency in 1896?

Expansionist Stirrings and War with Spain, 1878–1901

Why did the United States go to war with Spain and become an imperial power?



The Politics of Industrialization

Frank & Mearns-Hervey Wood Print Collections, Alexandria, VA

July 2, 1881, was a muggy summer day in Washington, DC, and President James A. Garfield was leaving town for a visit to western Massachusetts. At 9:30 A.M., as he strolled through the railroad station, shots rang out. Garfield fell, a bullet in his back. The shooter, Charles Guiteau, immediately surrendered. At first, doctors thought the president would recover. But as the doctors probed the wound with bare hands and unsterilized instruments, blood poisoning set in. On September 19, Garfield died.

The nation mourned. Garfield embodied the American dream of the self-made man. Born in a log cabin in Ohio, he fought in the Civil War, went to Congress in 1863, and was elected president in 1880.

Garfield also embodied a political generation that seemed more preoccupied with the spoils of office than with the problems of

ordinary people. In Congress, Garfield had been tainted by the 1872 Crédit Mobilier scandal and other corruption charges (see Chapter 16). The obscure Guiteau, a loyal party member who had supported Garfield, expected to be rewarded with a high diplomatic post. When this failed to materialize, his delusionary mental state worsened. Viewing Garfield's death as "a political necessity," he believed that the public would hail him as a hero. The jury rejected Guiteau's insanity plea, and in June 1882 he was hanged.

While contemporary critics viewed Garfield's assassination as an example of the absurdity of late-nineteenth-century politics, historians today see it as a sign of how closely contested political battles were. The expansion of large corporations, the settlement of the trans-Mississippi West, and the surge in urban growth put intense pressure on the political process. At stake was the government's proper role in the stimulation and regulation of America's explosive industrial growth.

This debate involved nothing less than contending visions of how industrial growth should or should not be regulated and who should benefit financially. The struggle to control economic expansion reached its peak in the 1890s when a new third party, the Populists, joined with the Democrats to challenge corporate control of the economy. In contrast, the Republican Party remained committed to encouraging the growth of large corporations, to freeing industry to expand without regulation, and to developing new markets.

From the mid-1870s to the mid-1890s, no party was able to control the political process. But in 1896, the election of President William F. McKinley ushered in a generation of Republican domination of national politics. Elected in a campaign focused on the restoration of prosperity, McKinley stumbled into war with Spain, substantially increased U.S. territory, and established new outposts from which American corporations could gain access to overseas markets.

PARTY POLITICS IN AN ERA OF UPHEAVAL, 1877–1884

How did political parties build coalitions out of their diverse ethnic and regional constituencies?

Between 1877 and 1894, four presidents squeezed into office by the narrowest of margins; control of the House of Representatives changed hands five times; and seven new western states were admitted into the Union. Amid intense competition, no party could muster a working majority. While the Democrats rebuilt their strength in the South, Republicans struggled to maintain the loyalties of the working class and to increase their support from business. At the municipal level, political machines worked to attract loyalty among immigrants and other newcomers in the rapidly expanding cities.

Contested Political Visions

In the late nineteenth century, more than 80 percent of eligible white males often voted. At the same time that voter turnout shot up, however, political parties sidestepped



Chronology

1869	Boss William M. Tweed gains control of Tammany Hall
1878	Congress requires U.S. Treasury to purchase silver
1880	James Garfield elected president
1881	Assassination of Garfield; Chester A. Arthur becomes president
1883	Pendleton Civil Service Act
1884	Grover Cleveland elected president
1886	<i>Wabash v. Illinois</i>
1887	Interstate Commerce Act
1888	Benjamin Harrison elected president
1889	National Farmers' Alliance formed
1890	Sherman Silver Purchase Act; Sherman Anti-Trust Act; McKinley Tariff
1893	Panic of 1893; repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act
1894	Coxey's "army" marches on Washington; Pullman strike
1895	Supreme Court declares federal income tax unconstitutional
1896	Democratic Party nominates William Jennings Bryan; William McKinley elected president
1898	Acquisition of Hawaii; Spanish-American War
1898	Guerrilla uprising in Philippines, lasted until 1902
1900	Currency Act officially places United States on gold standard
1901	Platt Amendment retains U.S. role in Cuba

many of the issues created by industrialization, such as taxation of corporations, support for those injured in factory accidents, and poverty relief. Except for the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 and the largely symbolic Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, Washington generally ignored the social consequences of industrialization and focused instead on encouraging economic growth.

How can we explain this refusal and, at the same time, account for the enormous popular support for parties? The answer lies in the political ideology of the period and the three major symbolic and economic issues that preoccupied lawmakers nationally: the tariff, the money supply, and civil-service reform.

Political parties in the late nineteenth century energized voters not only by appealing to economic self-interest, as in support for industrialization and pensions for Civil War veterans, but also by linking their programs to deeply held beliefs about the nature of the family and the proper role of government. Republicans justified their support for the tariff and defended their commitment to Union widows' pensions as a protection for the family home. Democrats countered, using metaphors of the seduction and rape of white women by outsiders and labeling Republican programs as classic examples of the perils of excessive government force. High tariffs endangered the family and threatened economic disaster. With respect to both parties, men, in particular, associated loyalty to party with a sense of masculinity.

Despite their differences, neither Republicans nor Democrats believed that the national government had any right to regulate corporations or to protect the social welfare of workers. Neither party therefore courted the labor union vote. Many members of both parties embraced the doctrine of **laissez-faire**—the belief that unregulated competition represented the best path to progress. According to this view, the federal government should promote economic development but not regulate industry.

Rather than looking to Washington, people turned to local or state authorities. On the Great Plains, angry farmers demanded that their state legislatures regulate railroad rates. In the cities, immigrant groups competed for political power while native-born reformers periodically attempted to oust the political machines and clean up corruption. Meanwhile, city and state governments vied with each other for control. When Chicago wanted to issue permits to street popcorn vendors, for example, the Illinois legislature had to pass a special act.

Both parties, in the North and the South, practiced fraud by rigging elections, throwing out opposition votes, and paying for “floaters” who moved from precinct to precinct to vote. Each expressed moral outrage at the other’s illegal behavior.

By linking economic policy to family values, both parties encouraged the participation of women in the political process, although most could not vote. Frances Willard and her followers in the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), for example, helped create a Prohibition and Home Protection Party in the 1880s. A decade later, western women Populists won full suffrage in Colorado, Idaho, and Utah.

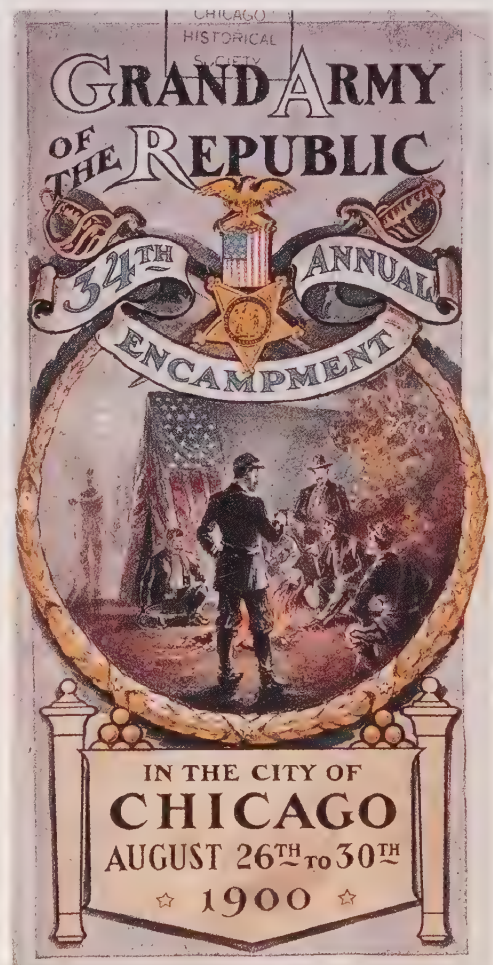
Patterns of Party Strength

In the 1870s and 1880s, each party had its own ideological appeal and centers of regional strength. The Democrats ruled the South, southern sections of border states like Ohio, and northern cities with large immigrant populations. They opposed tariff increases and attacked “governmental interference in the economy.” In addition, Democrats staunchly defended their immigrant followers. On state and local levels, they fiercely opposed prohibition, supported parochial schools, and rejected attempts to require English-only schooling.

The Republicans reigned in rural and small-town New England, Pennsylvania, and the upper Midwest, and drew support from the **Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)**, a social and political organization of northern Civil War veterans. Republicans often “waved the bloody shirt,” reminding voters that their party had led the nation during the Civil War. The Republicans ran a series of former Union army generals for president and voted for generous veterans’ benefits.

laissez-faire Belief that government should not interfere with the workings of the free market

Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Union veterans’ group that sought to broaden pensions and exercised political power by “waving the bloody shirt”



Chicago Historical Society

Poster Announcing GAR Encampment, Chicago, 1900

In addition to their nostalgic annual reunions, Union army veterans, organized as the Grand Army of the Republic, were a potent force in Republican Party politics by lobbying for pensions and other benefits.

Although issues of governmental authority dominated on the federal level, family tradition, ethnic ties, religious affiliation, and local issues often determined an individual's vote. Outside the South, ethnicity and religion were the most reliable predictors of party affiliation. Catholics and Americans of German ancestry tended to vote Democratic. Old-stock Protestant northerners and immigrants from northern Europe, in contrast, voted Republican, as did blacks in both the North and the South. Political battles often centered on cultural differences, most notably prohibition. Irish whiskey drinkers, German beer drinkers, and Italian wine drinkers were equally outraged by antiliquor legislation.

political machine Urban political organization that controlled patronage and manipulated immigrants

Political Bosses and Machine Politics

The swelling numbers of urban dwellers gave rise to a new kind of politician, the “boss,” who presided over the city’s **political machine**—an unofficial political organization designed to keep a particular party or faction in office. Whether officially serving as mayor or not, the boss, assisted by local ward or precinct captains, wielded enormous influence in city government.

For better or worse, the political machine was America’s unique contribution to municipal government in an era of pell-mell urban growth. Typified by Tammany Hall, the Democratic organization that dominated New York City politics from the 1830s to the 1930s, machines emerged in a host of cities after the Civil War.

By the turn of the century, many cities had experienced machine rule. Working through the local ward captains to turn out voters, the machine rode herd on the tangle of municipal bureaucracies, controlling who was hired for the police and fire departments. It rewarded its friends and punished its enemies through its control of taxes, licenses, and inspections.

At the neighborhood level, the ward boss often acted as a welfare agent, helping the needy and protecting the troubled. Spending three dollars to pay a fine for a juvenile offense meant a lot to the poor, but it was small change to a boss who raked in millions from public-utility contracts and land deals. While the machine helped alleviate some suffering, it entangled urban social services with corrupt politics and often prevented city government from responding to the real problems of the city’s neediest inhabitants.

Under New York City’s boss **William “Magear” Tweed**, the Tammany Hall machine sank to new depths of corruption. Between 1869 and 1871, Tweed dispensed sixty thousand patronage positions and pumped up the city’s debt by \$70 million through graft and inflated contracts.

By the turn of the century, the bosses were facing well-organized assaults on their power, led by an urban elite whose members sought to restore “good government.” In this atmosphere the bosses increasingly forged alliances with civic organizations and reform leagues. The results paved the way for new sewage and transportation systems, expanded parklands, and improved public services—a record of considerable accomplishment, given the magnitude of the problems created by urban growth.

William “Magear” Tweed Corrupt boss of the Tammany Hall organization that ran New York City

Regulating the Money Supply

In the 1870s, politicians confronted a tough problem of economic policy: how to create a money supply adequate for a growing economy without producing inflation.

Americans' almost superstitious reverence for gold and silver created problems of its own. Many believed that only gold or silver, or certificates exchangeable for these metals, were trustworthy. All antebellum federal currency consisted of gold or silver coins or U.S. Treasury notes redeemable in gold or silver. During the Civil War, the federal government issued "greenbacks," paper money not backed by either precious metal.

Bankers and creditors also believed that economic stability required a strictly limited currency supply. Debtors, in contrast, favored expanding the money supply to make it easier for them to pay off their debts. The monetary debate thus focused on a specific question: Should the Civil War paper "greenbacks" still in circulation be retained or eliminated, leaving only a currency backed by gold? The hard times associated with the Panic of 1873 sharpened this dispute.

The Greenback Party (founded in 1877) called for an expanded money supply, as well as other measures to benefit workers and farmers. In the 1878 midterm elections, Greenback candidates received more than 1 million votes and won fourteen seats in Congress (see Chapter 16).

As prosperity returned, the Greenback Party faded, but the money issue did not. An even longer-lasting controversy surged over the coinage of silver. In 1873, Congress instructed the U.S. mint to cease making silver coins, thus "demonetizing" silver. But new discoveries in Nevada (see Chapter 17) soon increased the silver supply, leading debtor groups to demand that the government resume the coinage of silver.

Enthusiastically backed by the silver-mine owners, silver forces won a partial victory in 1878, when Congress required the treasury to buy and mint up to \$4 million worth of silver each month. But the treasury, dominated by monetary conservatives, sabotaged the law's intent by refusing to circulate the silver dollars that it minted.

Frustrated silver advocates tried a new approach in the **Sherman Silver Purchase Act** of 1890. This measure instructed the treasury to buy 4.5 million ounces of silver monthly and issue treasury notes, redeemable in gold or silver, equivalent to the cost of these purchases. The money supply increased, but only slightly. Thus, the controversy over silver dragged on.

Sherman Silver Purchase Act
Law passed in 1890 in response to farmers' calls for inflationary monetary policies

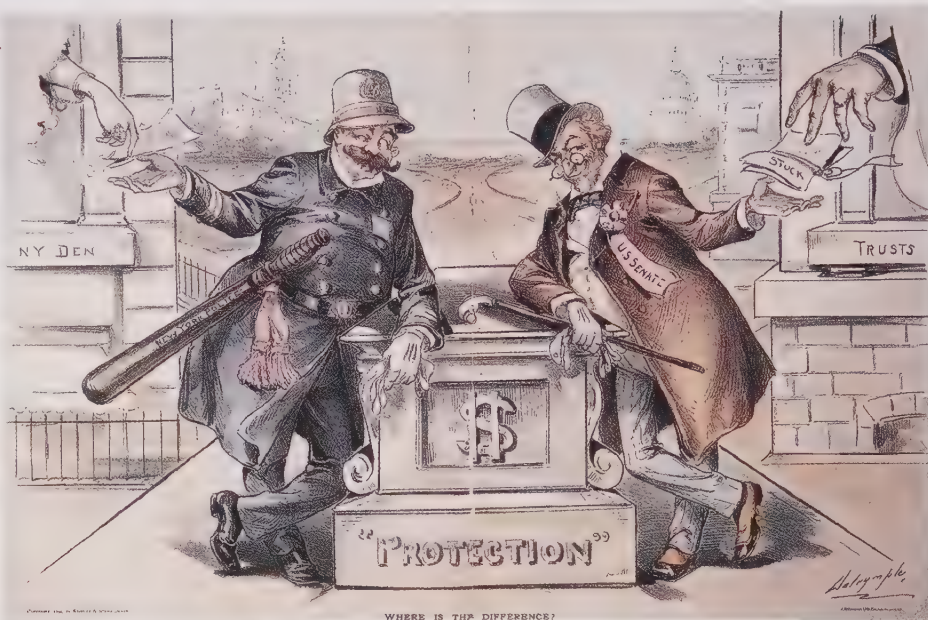
Civil-Service Reform

For decades, successful candidates had rewarded supporters and contributors with jobs ranging from cabinet seats to lowly municipal posts. Defenders called the system "rotation in office" and claimed that it was a democratic way of filling government positions. Critics, however, dubbed it the spoils system after the old expression, "To the victor belong the spoils."

For years, a small but influential group of reformers had campaigned for a professional civil service based on merit. Well-educated and wealthy, these reformers favored a government staffed by "gentlemen." The reformers had a point. A professional civil service was needed as government grew more complex. Cautiously embracing

“Where Is the Difference?”

By equating criminal payoffs to the police with corporate contributions to senators, this cartoon in *Puck* magazine suggests that corruption pervades society and needs to be stopped.



The Granger Collection, NYC

the civil-service cause, President Hayes in 1877 launched an investigation of the corrupt New York City customs office and fired two high officials. One, Chester A. Arthur, had played a key role in passing out jobs.

When Congressman James A. Garfield won the 1880 Republican presidential nomination, the delegates, to appease the opposing New York faction, chose Chester A. Arthur, the loyalist Hayes had recently fired, as Garfield's running mate. Since Garfield enjoyed excellent health, the choice of the totally unqualified Arthur seemed safe. The Democrats nominated a career army officer, Winfield Scott Hancock, and the Greenbackers gave the nod to Congressman James B. Weaver of Iowa. Garfield edged out Hancock by a razor-thin margin; Weaver trailed far behind.

Garfield's assassination in 1881 by the crazed office-seeker Charles Guiteau brought Vice President Arthur, the very symbol of patronage corruption, to the White House. Civil-service reformers then portrayed the fallen president as a spoils-system martyr. In 1883, Congress enacted the **Pendleton Civil Service Act**, which set up a commission to prepare competitive examinations and establish standards of merit for a variety of federal jobs. It also forbade political candidates from soliciting contributions from government workers.

The creation of a professional civil service helped bring the federal government in step with the modernizing trends transforming society. As for Chester A. Arthur, his performance surprised those who had expected him to be an utter disaster. Arthur supported civil-service reform and proved quite independent. Fed up with the feuding Republicans, in 1882 the voters gave the Democrats a strong majority in the House of Representatives. In 1884, for the first time since 1856, they would put a Democrat in the White House: Grover Cleveland.

Pendleton Civil Service Act

Attempt to end spoils system and create a professional civil service

CHECKING IN

- Republicans stressed probusiness measures, such as the tariff, and claimed they were protecting American families.
- Democrats decried government interference, such as the tariff, and said they were the ones protecting families.
- Republicans flourished in New England and the Midwest, whereas Democrats dominated the South and urban areas.
- Battles over greenbacks and the coinage of silver played a major role in national politics.
- Civil-service reform became a major issue, especially after Garfield's death at the hands of a deranged office-seeker.

POLITICS OF PRIVILEGE, POLITICS OF EXCLUSION, 1884–1892

What factors prompted the rise of the Grange and the Farmers' Alliance movements?

The stalemate between the two major parties in their battle to establish the standards for economic growth continued under President Cleveland, a Democrat, and President Harrison, a Republican. Both challenged powerful interests and faced stiff opposition. Cleveland alienated strong lobbies by calling for cuts in the tariff and in veterans' pensions. In 1888, one of the most corrupt elections in American history put Benjamin Harrison of Indiana in the White House, thus restoring big business and the veterans' lobby to the driver's seat. Simultaneously, debt-ridden farmers mounted protests and began to organize. And in the South, the white majority consolidated their political power by denying the region's black citizens their most basic rights.

A Democrat in the White House: Grover Cleveland, 1885–1889

At a tumultuous Chicago convention in 1884, the Republicans nominated their best-known leader, James G. Blaine. Blaine was a gifted orator; however, his name had been stained by the revelation that he, as Speaker of the House, had offered political favors to a railroad company in exchange for stock. For reformers, Blaine epitomized the hated patronage system. To E. L. Godkin, he “wallowed in spoils like a rhinoceros in an African pool.”

Sensing Blaine's vulnerability, the Democrats chose a sharply contrasting nominee, Grover Cleveland of New York. In a meteoric rise from reform mayor of Buffalo to governor, Cleveland had fought the bosses and spoils men. The shrewdness of the Democrats' choice became apparent when Godkin, Carl Schurz, and other Republican reformers bolted to Cleveland. They were promptly nicknamed **Mugwumps**, an Algonquian term for a renegade chief.

Unfortunately, as a young man Cleveland had fathered an illegitimate child. He admitted the indiscretion, but the Republicans still jeered at rallies: “Ma, Ma, where's my pa?” Facing opposition from the New York City Democratic machine that he had fought as governor, Cleveland risked losing his own state. But in October, a New York City clergyman publicly denounced the Democrats as the party of “Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion.” Blaine failed to immediately repudiate the remark. This blunder and the Mugwumps' defection allowed Cleveland to carry New York State by twelve hundred votes, and with it the election.

Once in office, Cleveland embraced the belief that government must not meddle in the economy and opposed any public regulation of corporations. He also rejected providing any governmental help for those in need. In vetoing a bill that would have provided seeds to drought-stricken farmers in Texas, he warned that people should not expect the government to solve their problems.

One matter did arouse Cleveland, however: the tariff. Since it was a major source of revenue in the era before a federal income tax, the tariff functioned as a protection for special interests and a source of government income. But questions remained regarding which imported goods should be subject to duties, and how much?

Mugwumps Reformers, including E. L. Godkin and Carl Schurz, who switched from the Republican to the Democratic Party in 1884

Opinions differed radically. Producers of commodities like coal, timber, and wool demanded tariff protection against foreign competition, as did many manufacturers. Other businesses, however, while seeking protection for their finished products, wanted low tariffs on the raw materials they required. Most farmers, in contrast, hated all tariffs for making it hard to sell American farm products abroad.

Cleveland's call for lower tariffs arose from his concern that high tariffs created huge federal budget surpluses, which tempted legislators to spend more money on pet projects in their home districts. With his distaste for paternalistic government, Cleveland viewed the budget surplus as a corrupting influence. Although the Democratic campaign of 1888 gave little attention to the issue, corporate leaders found Cleveland's talk of lower tariffs threatening.

Cleveland stirred up another hornet's nest by opposing the routine payment of veterans' disability pensions. No one opposed pensions for the deserving, but fraudulent claims proliferated. Unlike his predecessors, Cleveland investigated these claims and rejected many. He also vetoed a bill that would have pensioned all disabled veterans whether or not the disability occurred in military service. The pension roll should be an honor roll, he stressed, not a refuge for fraud.

Big Business Strikes Back: Benjamin Harrison, 1889–1893

By 1888 some influential groups had concluded that Cleveland must go. Republicans turned to Benjamin Harrison of Indiana. A corporation lawyer and former senator, Harrison was so aloof that some ridiculed him as the human iceberg. To avoid alienating voters, his campaign managers brought delegations to his Indiana home, where he hammered at the tariff issue. Harrison warned that only a high tariff could ensure business prosperity, decent wages, and a healthy home market for farmers.

The Republicans amassed a \$4 million campaign fund from worried business leaders to purchase posters, buttons, and votes. Despite voter fraud, Cleveland received almost one hundred thousand more votes than Harrison. But Harrison won the key states of New York and Indiana and won the electoral vote. Once in office, Harrison swiftly rewarded his supporters. He appointed as commissioner of pensions a GAR official who, on taking office, declared "God help the surplus!" The pension rolls soon ballooned from 676,000 to nearly a million. This massive pension system became America's first large public-welfare program. In 1890, the triumphant Republicans also passed the McKinley Tariff, which pushed rates to an all-time high.

Rarely has the federal government been so subservient to entrenched economic interests and so out of touch with the plight of the disadvantaged as during the 1880s. But inaction bred discontent. In the election of 1890, the Democrats gained sixty-six congressional seats and won control of the House of Representatives. Farmers, too, turned to politics and swung into action.

Agrarian Protest and the Rise of the People's Party

Plains farming had long been a risky venture (see Chapter 17). Between 1873 and 1877, terrible grasshopper infestations consumed half the midwestern wheat crop. As production recovered, prices fell. Wheat tumbled from

\$2.95 a bushel in 1866 to \$1.06 in 1880. Indebted farmers went bankrupt or barely survived. One struggling Minnesota farmer wrote the governor in 1874, “[W]e can see nothing but starvation in the future if relief does not come.”

In 1867, midwestern farmers formed the **Grange**, or “Patrons of Husbandry.” Membership climbed to more than 1.5 million by the early 1870s. Offering information, emotional support, and fellowship, the Grange urged farmers to “buy less and produce more, in order to make our farms more self-sustaining.” They negotiated special discounts with farm-machinery dealers and set up “cash-only” cooperative stores and grain-storage elevators to cut out the “middlemen”—the bankers, grain brokers, and merchants who made money at the farmers’ expense.

Grange First major farmers’ political movement

Grangers focused their wrath on railroads, which gave discounts to large shippers, bribed state legislators, and charged higher rates for short runs than for long hauls. Midwestern Grangers successfully lobbied state legislatures in 1874 to pass laws fixing maximum rates for freight shipments. The railroads appealed these “Granger laws” to the Supreme Court. But in *Munn v. Illinois* (1877), the Court ruled against the railroads and upheld an Illinois law setting maximum grain storage rates.

When the Court reversed itself in *Wabash v. Illinois* (1886), Congress passed the Interstate Commerce Act (1887), reaffirming the federal government’s power to oversee railroad activities and establishing a new agency, the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC), to do just that. Although the commission failed to curb the railroads’ monopolistic practices, it did establish the principle of federal regulation of interstate transportation.

Despite promising beginnings, the Grange movement soon faltered. By 1878, through lobbying at the state level, railroads had won repeal of most state regulations. In addition, the cash-only cooperatives failed, because most farmers had little cash. The Grange ideal of financial independence proved unrealistic because conditions prevailing on the Plains made it impossible to farm without borrowing money. When the prices of corn, wheat, and cotton briefly revived after 1878, many farmers deserted the movement.

The problems that drove farmers to form the Grange prompted southern and midwestern farmers to form the alliance movement. The **Farmers’ Alliance** began in Texas in the 1870s as small planters, trapped by the crop lien system, mortgaged future harvests to cover current expenses. Mired in debt, about a third of southern farmers gave up their land and became tenants or sharecroppers by 1900.

Farmers’ Alliance Successful farm protest movement, organized regionally; spawned the Populist Party

In 1887, Texan Charles W. Macune assumed leadership of the Alliance movement. By 1889, Macune had merged several regional groups into the National Farmers’ Alliance and Industrial Union, or the Southern Alliance. A parallel black organization, the National Colored Farmers’ Alliance, emerged in Arkansas and spread to other southern states.

As they attended alliance rallies, read the alliance newspaper, and listened to alliance speakers, hard-hit farm families became increasingly aware of their political potential. An Arkansas member wrote in 1889, “Reform never begins with the leaders, it comes from the people.” By 1890, the Southern Alliance boasted 3 million members and its black counterpart another 1.2 million.

Meanwhile, alliance fever had spread to the Great Plains. Alliances sprang up in Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota. Hit hard by drought and insect infestations, Western Kansas lost 50 percent of its population between 1888 and 1892.

“In God we trusted, in Kansas we busted,” some scrawled on their wagons. Others hung on, and the Kansas Alliance grew to 130,000 members by 1890. What had begun as a desperate attempt to save their farms had now turned into a massive political campaign.

Reformers at first tried to create a biracial movement. Southern Alliance leaders Tom Watson of Georgia and Leonidas Polk of North Carolina urged southern farmers, black and white, to act together. For a time, this message of racial cooperation in the interest of reform offered promise. Women were involved in the movement as well. Mary E. Lease, a Wichita lawyer, burst on the scene in 1890 as a fiery alliance orator. Other women rallied to the new cause, founding the National Women’s Alliance (NWA) in 1891.

As the movement swelled, the opposition turned nasty. When Jerry Simpson, an alliance rancher from Kansas, mentioned the silk stockings of a conservative politician in his district and noted that he had no such finery, a hostile newspaper editor labeled him “Sockless Jerry” Simpson, the nickname he carried to his grave. When Mary Lease advised Kansans to “raise less corn and more hell,” a conservative newspaper sneered, “[Kansas] has started to raise hell, as Mrs. Lease advised, and [the state] seems to have an overproduction.”

All this activity helped shape a new political agenda. In 1889, the Southern and Northwestern Alliances loosely merged and lined up candidates in the 1890 midterm elections. Alliance candidates focused on government action on behalf of farmers and workers, including tariff reduction, a graduated income tax, public ownership of the railroads, a ban on landownership by aliens, and “the free and unlimited coinage of silver.”

The 1890 elections revealed the strength of agrarian protest. Southern Democrats who endorsed alliance goals won four governorships and control of eight state legislatures. On the Great Plains, alliance-endorsed candidates controlled the Kansas and Nebraska legislatures and gained the balance of power in Minnesota and South Dakota. Three alliance-backed senators and fifty congressmen went to Washington in 1890 as angry winds from the hinterlands buffeted the political system.

Regional differences, which threatened to divide the movement, were soon overcome by shared economic grievance. In February 1892, alliance leaders organized the People’s Party of the United States, generally called the **Populist Party**. At the party convention in Omaha, Nebraska, that August, cheering delegates nominated for president the former Civil War general James B. Weaver of Iowa. The Populist platform called for the direct popular election of senators and other electoral reforms. It also endorsed a **subtreasury plan** by which farmers could store their nonperishable commodities in government warehouses and then sell the stored commodities when market prices rose. Ignatius Donnelly’s ringing preamble called for a return of the government “to the hands of ‘the plain people’ with which class it originated.”

Populist Party Agrarian-based third-party challenge to Republicans and Democrats

subtreasury plan Charles Macune’s plan to bring government aid to struggling farmers

African-Americans After Reconstruction

As the Populists organized, a group of citizens with profound grievances suffered renewed oppression. As discussed in Chapter 16, with the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and the restoration of power to white elites, southern whites sought an end to “Negro rule” and tried to suppress the black vote. Initially, whites relied on

intimidation, terror, and fraud to limit black voting rights, but in 1890 Mississippi amended its state constitution to exclude most black voters, and other southern states followed suit.

Because the Fifteenth Amendment (1870) had guaranteed all male citizens' right to vote, white southerners used indirect means, such as literacy tests, poll taxes, and property requirements, to disfranchise blacks. To protect illiterate whites, the so-called grandfather clause exempted from these electoral requirements anyone with an ancestor who had voted in 1860. Black disfranchisement proceeded erratically, but by the early twentieth century it was essentially complete.

Disfranchisement was only one part of the system of white supremacy. In a parallel development, state after state passed laws imposing strict racial segregation in many realms of life (see Chapter 21). African-American caterers, barbers, contractors, bricklayers, carpenters, and other artisans lost their white clientele. Blacks who went to prison—sometimes for minor offenses—faced the convict-lease system, which cotton planters, railroad builders, and other employers used to “lease” prison gangs and force them to work under slave-labor conditions. Thousands died under the brutal convict-labor system, which survived into the early decades of the twentieth century.

Lynching became the ultimate enforcer of white supremacy. Through the 1880s and 1890s, about a hundred blacks were lynched annually in the United States, mainly in the South. The stated reasons for lynching, often the rape of a white woman, frequently arose from rumor and unsubstantiated accusations. The charge of “attempted rape” could cover a wide range of behaviors unacceptable to whites, such as questioning authority or talking back.

lynching Vigilante hanging of those accused of crimes; used primarily against blacks

The lynch mob demonstrated whites' absolute power. In the South, more than 80 percent of the lynchings involved black victims. Lynchings most commonly occurred in the Cotton Belt, and they tended to rise at times of economic distress. Not surprisingly, lynching reached its highest point in 1892 as many poor blacks joined the agrarian protest and rallied to the Populist Party banner.

The relationship between southern agrarian protest and white racism was complex. Some Populists, like Georgia's Tom Watson, sought to build an interracial movement. Watson denounced lynching and the convict-lease system. When a black Populist leader pursued by a lynch mob took refuge in his house during the 1892 campaign, Watson summoned two thousand armed white Populists to defend him. However, most white Populists clung to racism.

On balance, the rise of southern agrarian protest deepened racial hatred and worsened blacks' situation. Meanwhile, the federal government stood aside. A generation of northern politicians paid lip service to egalitarian principles but failed to apply them to African-Americans.

The Supreme Court similarly abandoned African-Americans. The Court ripped gaping holes in the Fourteenth Amendment, which guaranteed blacks citizenship and equal protection of the law, and the Civil Rights Act of 1875, which outlawed racial discrimination. In the *Civil Rights Cases* (1883), the Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional. According to the justices, the Fourteenth Amendment prevented governments, but not individuals, from infringing on civil rights. In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), the Court upheld a Louisiana law requiring segregated railroad cars. Racial segregation was constitutional, the justices ruled, if equal facilities were made available to each race. With the Supreme Court's blessing,

Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court ruling validating “separate but equal”

the South also segregated its public schools, ignoring the caveat that separate facilities must be equal. White children studied in nicer buildings, used newer equipment, and were taught by better-paid teachers. Not until 1954 did the Court overturn the “separate but equal” doctrine. Rounding out a dismal record, the justices in 1898 upheld the poll tax and literacy tests by which southern states had disfranchised blacks.

Few northerners protested the South’s white supremacist society. However, the restoration of sectional harmony came at a high price: acquiescence by the North of the utter debasement of the South’s black citizenry. Further, the separatist principle endorsed in *Plessy* had a pervasive impact, affecting blacks nationwide, Mexicans in Texas, Asians in California, and other groups.

Blacks responded to their plight in various ways. The nation’s foremost black leader from the 1890s until his death in 1915 was **Booker T. Washington**. Born into slavery in Virginia in 1856, Washington enrolled at a freedman’s school in Hampton, Virginia, and in 1881 organized a black state vocational school in Alabama that eventually became Tuskegee (**tuss-KEE-ghee**) University. Washington attained prominence in 1895 when he gave an address in Atlanta insisting that the first task of blacks must be to acquire vocational skills. Once blacks proved their economic value, he predicted, racism would fade; meanwhile, they must patiently accept their lot. Washington lectured widely, and his autobiography, *Up from Slavery* (1901), recounted his rise from poverty thanks to honesty, hard work, and kindly patrons—themes familiar from Horatio Alger’s self-help books.

Other blacks responded resourcefully to racism. Black churches provided emotional support, as did black fraternal lodges. In addition, a handful of blacks established banks and successful businesses, such as insurance companies and barbershops.

Meanwhile, voices of black protest never wholly died out. Frederick Douglass urged that blacks press on for full equality. Blacks should meet violence with violence, insisted militant New York black leader T. Thomas Fortune. But for others, the solution was to leave the South. In 1879, several thousand “exodusters” moved to Kansas (see Chapter 16). Some ten thousand migrated to Chicago between 1870 and 1890. Blacks who moved north, however, soon found that public opinion sanctioned many forms of de facto discrimination.

The rise of the so-called solid South had important political implications. For one thing, it made a mockery of the two-party system. For years, the only meaningful election south of the Potomac was the Democratic primary. The large bloc of southern Democrats elected to Congress each year, accumulating seniority and power, exerted a great and often reactionary influence on public policy. Finally, southern Democrats wielded enormous clout in the national party. No Democratic contender for national office who was unacceptable to them stood a chance.

Above all, the rigid caste system of the post-Reconstruction South shaped the consciousness of those caught up in it, white and black alike. Describing her girlhood in the turn-of-the-century South, white novelist Lillian Smith wrote, “I learned it is possible to pray at night and ride a Jim Crow car the next morning; . . . to glow when the word democracy was used, and to practice slavery from morning to night.”

Booker T. Washington

Leading black figure of the late nineteenth century; stressed vocational education and accommodation

CHECKING IN

- Grover Cleveland attempted tariff reforms and tried to gain control of the pension system.
- Big business and the GAR combined to defeat Cleveland in 1888.
- The Grange movement rose as an attempt by farmers to reassert control over their lives, which seemed to be at the mercy of railroads, middlemen, and bankers.
- The Alliance superseded the Grange and ultimately organized the Populist Party in 1892.
- Blacks were increasingly shut out of political life; they turned to accommodationist leaders like Booker T. Washington.

THE 1890s: POLITICS IN A DEPRESSION DECADE

Why did William Jennings Bryan fail to win the presidency in 1896?

In the 1890s, smoldering discontent with the major parties burst into flames. As banks failed and railroads went bankrupt, the nation slid into a grinding depression. The crises of the 1890s laid bare the paralysis of the federal government—dominated by a business elite—when confronted by the new social realities of factories, urban slums, immigrant workers, and desperate farmers. In response, irate farmers, laborers, and their supporters joined a new party, the Populists, to challenge the system.

1892: Populists Challenge the Status Quo

The Populist Party platform adopted in July 1892 offered a broad vision of national reform. That same month, thirteen people died in a gun battle between strikers and strike-breakers at the Homestead steel plant near Pittsburgh, and President Harrison sent federal troops to Idaho, where a silver-mine strike had turned violent. Events seemed to justify the Populists' warnings of chaos ahead.

The 1892 campaign for the White House was a replay of 1888, Harrison versus Cleveland, but this time Cleveland won by more than 360,000 votes, a decisive margin in an era of close elections. A public reaction against labor violence and the McKinley Tariff hurt Harrison. Meanwhile, a solid showing by Populist candidates sparked great hopes for the future. James B. Weaver got more than 1 million votes, 8.5 percent of the total, and the Populists elected five senators, ten congressmen, and three governors. But the party's strength was spotty. It made no dent in New England, the urban East, or the traditionally Republican farm regions of the Midwest.

In the South, racism, Democratic loyalty, distaste for the former Union general Weaver, and widespread voter fraud kept the Populist tally under 25 percent. This failure killed the prospects for interracial agrarian reform. After 1892, southern politicians seeking to appeal to poor whites—including a disillusioned Tom Watson—stayed within the Democratic fold and laced their populism with racism.

Capitalism in Crisis: The Depression of 1893–1897

Cleveland soon confronted a major crisis: an economic collapse in the railroad industry that quickly spread. The first hint of trouble flared up in February 1893 when the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad failed. This bankruptcy came at a moment of weakened confidence in the government's ability to redeem paper money with gold on demand. Economic problems in London in 1890 had forced British investors to unload millions of dollars in American stocks, draining U.S. gold reserves. Moreover, the Sherman Silver Purchase's requirement that the government pay for its monthly silver purchases with treasury certificates redeemable for either silver or gold further drained gold reserves.

Between January 1892 and March 1893, the gold reserve had fallen to \$100 million, the minimum considered necessary to support the dollar. This decline alarmed those who viewed the gold standard as the only sure evidence of the government's financial stability.

Panic of 1893 Wall Street collapse that touched off a nationwide economic depression

The railroad's collapse thus triggered the **Panic of 1893**. Fear fed on itself as alarmed investors converted their stock holdings to gold. Stock prices plunged; the gold reserve sank; by the end of the year, seventy-four railroads and more than fifteen thousand commercial institutions, including six hundred banks, had failed. The Panic of 1893 started a full-scale depression and set off four years of hard times.

The crisis took a heavy human toll. Industrial unemployment soared to as much as 25 percent. Millions of factory workers had no money to buy food or heat their homes, and jobless men tramped the streets looking for work. Unusually harsh winters in 1893 and 1894 aggravated the misery, especially in major cities. In New York City, where the crisis quickly swamped local relief agencies, a minister reported actual starvation. Rural America, already hard hit by declining agricultural prices, faced ruin. Corn plummeted from 50¢ to 21¢ a bushel. Cotton fell to 5¢ a pound.

Some desperate Americans turned to protest. In Massillon, Ohio, self-taught monetary expert Jacob Coxey proposed as a solution to unemployment a \$500 million public-works program funded with paper money. Coxey organized a march on Washington to lobby for his scheme. Thousands joined him en route, and several hundred actually reached Washington in late April 1894. However, police arrested Coxey and other leaders when they attempted to enter the Capitol grounds, and his "army" broke up. Although some considered Coxey eccentric, his proposal closely resembled programs that the government would adopt during the depression of the 1930s.

As unrest intensified, fear clutched middle-class Americans. A church magazine demanded that troops put "a pitiless stop" to outbreaks of unrest. To some observers, a bloody upheaval seemed imminent.

Business Leaders Respond

In the face of suffering and turmoil, Cleveland refused to intervene. Boom-and-bust economic cycles were inevitable, he insisted. Government could do nothing. Missing the larger picture, Cleveland focused on a single issue, the gold standard. In August 1893, he persuaded Congress to repeal the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, which he blamed for the run on gold.

Nevertheless, the gold drain continued. In early 1895, with the gold reserve down to \$41 million, Cleveland turned to Wall Street. Bankers J. P. Morgan and August Belmont agreed to lend the government \$62 million in exchange for discounted U.S. bonds. The government then purchased gold to replenish the reserve. Meanwhile, Morgan and Belmont resold their bonds for a substantial profit. The deal helped to restore confidence in the government's economic stability. However, Cleveland's gambit confirmed radicals' suspicions of an unholy alliance between Washington and Wall Street.

As the tariff battle made clear, corporate interests held the whip hand. Although Cleveland favored tariff reform, the Congress of 1893–1895—despite its Democratic majorities—generally yielded to high-tariff lobbyists. The Wilson-Gorman Tariff of 1894 made so many concessions to special interests that Cleveland disgustingly allowed it to become law without his signature.

Hinting at changes ahead, the Wilson-Gorman Tariff imposed a modest income tax of 2 percent on all income over \$4,000 (about \$40,000 in purchasing

power today). But in 1895 the Supreme Court declared the tax unconstitutional. Thus, whether one looked at the executive, the legislature, or the judiciary, Washington's subordination to financial interests seemed absolute.

The depression also helped reorient social thought. Middle-class charitable workers, long convinced that individual character flaws caused poverty, now realized that even sober and hard-working people could succumb to economic forces beyond their control. Laissez-faire ideology weakened too, as depression-worn Americans adopted a broader conception of government's proper role in dealing with the social consequences of industrialization. The depression, in short, not only brought suffering; it also taught lessons.

Silver Advocates Capture the Democratic Party

Republican gains in the 1894 midterm elections revealed the depth of revulsion against Cleveland and the Democrats, who were blamed for the hard times. Republicans gained control of Congress and several key states. Populist candidates won nearly 1.5 million votes, 40 percent over their 1892 total. Most of the Populist gains came in the South.

The serious economic conflict that split Americans focused on a symbolic issue: free silver. Cleveland's rigid defense of the gold standard forced his opponents into an exaggerated obsession with silver, obscuring the genuine issues dividing rich and poor, creditor and debtor, and farmer and city-dweller. Conservatives tirelessly upheld the gold standard, and agrarian radicals extolled silver as a universal cure-all.

Each side had a point. Gold advocates recognized that uncontrolled inflation could be catastrophic. The silver advocates knew from experience how tight-money policies depressed prices and devastated farmers. Unfortunately, these underlying realities were rarely expressed clearly.

At the 1896 Democratic convention in Chicago, western and southern delegates adopted a platform demanding the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio to gold of sixteen to one—in effect, repudiating the Cleveland administration.

William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska, an ardent advocate of free silver, captured the nomination. Only thirty-six years old, the young lawyer had already served two terms in Congress championing western agrarian interests.

Joining Christian imagery with economic analysis, Bryan delivered his major convention speech during the debate over the platform. With his booming voice carrying his words to the upper gallery of the convention hall, Bryan praised farmers as the nation's bedrock. The wildly cheering delegates had identified their candidate even before he reached his rousing conclusion—"You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold!"

The silverites' capture of the Democratic Party left the Populists with a dilemma. They, too, advocated free silver, but only as one reform among many. To back Bryan would be to abandon the broad Populist program. But a separate Populist ticket would likely siphon votes from Bryan and ensure a Republican victory. Reluctantly, the Populists endorsed Bryan. The Republicans, meanwhile, nominated former Ohio governor William McKinley on a platform endorsing the high protective tariff and the gold standard.

William Jennings Bryan

Orator, champion of farm interests, anti-imperialist, three-time Democratic presidential candidate

1896: Republicans Triumphant

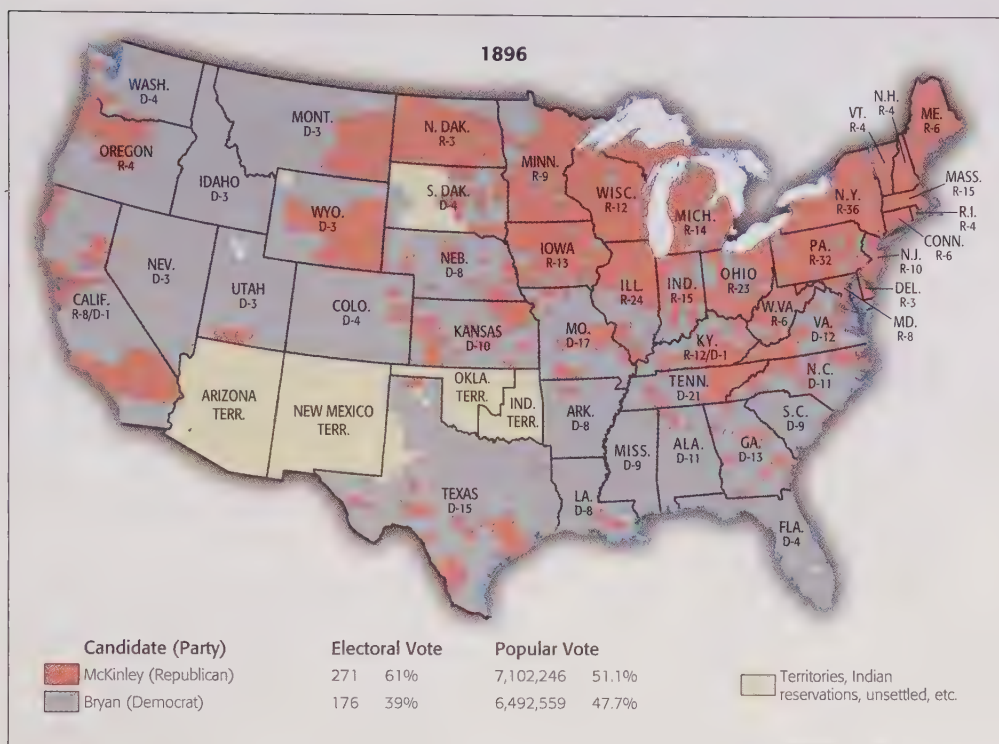
Bryan did his best to sustain the momentum of the Chicago convention, crisscrossing the country by train to deliver his free-silver campaign speech. One skeptical editor compared him to Nebraska's notoriously shallow Platte River: six inches deep and a mile wide at the mouth.

Mark Hanna, a Cleveland industrialist, managed McKinley's campaign. Dignified and aloof, McKinley could not match Bryan's popular touch. Accordingly, Hanna built the campaign not around the candidate but around posters, pamphlets, and newspaper editorials. These publications warned of the dangers of free silver, caricatured Bryan as a radical, and portrayed McKinley and the gold standard as twin pillars of prosperity.

Drawing on a war chest possibly as large as \$7 million, Hanna spent lavishly. J. P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller together contributed \$500,000 to the McKinley campaign, far more than Bryan's total campaign contributions. McKinley himself stayed home in Canton, Ohio, emerging from time to time to read speeches to visiting delegations. All told, some 750,000 people trekked to Canton to take part in McKinley's cleverly organized "front-porch campaign."

**Women Bryan Supporters**

Although women could not vote in national elections in the 1890s, they actively participated in political campaigns. These women worked to turn out the vote for William Jennings Bryan.



Map 20.1
The Election of 1896

Interactive Map

On election day, McKinley beat Bryan by over six hundred thousand votes (see Map 20.1). He swept the Northeast and the Midwest and even carried three farm states beyond the Mississippi as well as California and Oregon. Bryan's strength was limited to the South and the Great Plains and mountain states.

Why did Bryan lose despite protest spirit abroad in the land? His core constituency, while passionately loyal, was limited. Seduced by free silver and Bryan's oratory, the Democrats upheld a platform and a candidate with little appeal for factory workers. Urban voters, realizing that higher farm prices also meant higher food prices, went heavily for McKinley. Bryan's weakness in urban America reflected cultural differences as well. To urban Catholics and Jews, this moralistic, teetotaling Nebraskan thundering like a Protestant revival preacher seemed utterly alien.

The McKinley administration translated its conservative platform into law. The Dingley Tariff (1897) pushed rates to all-time highs, and the Currency Act of 1900 committed the United States to the gold standard. Because of returning prosperity, rising farm prices, and the discovery of gold in Alaska, these measures roused little opposition, and McKinley easily defeated Bryan again in 1900.

The elections of 1894 and 1896 produced a Republican majority that, except for Woodrow Wilson's presidency (1913–1921), would dominate national politics until the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932. Populism collapsed, but an emerging new reform movement, progressivism, would bring many of the Populists' proposals to fruition.

CHECKING IN

- Populists won more than a million votes in the 1892 presidential election.
- The Panic of 1893 hardened into a deep depression; want and suffering were widespread.
- Coxey's army showed the depth of discontent with the political system; nevertheless, corporate interests continued to dominate national politics.
- The midterm elections of 1894 showed revulsion against the Democrats, whom voters blamed for the depression following the Panic of 1893.
- In 1896, the Democrats bowed to free-silver interests and nominated the eloquent William Jennings Bryan, who was defeated by Republican William McKinley.
- Populism collapsed, paving the way for a Republican majority that would dominate national politics for the next fifteen years.

EXPANSIONIST STIRRINGS AND WAR WITH SPAIN, 1878–1901

Why did the United States go to war with Spain and become an imperial power?

The same corporate elite that dominated late-nineteenth-century domestic politics influenced U.S. foreign policy as well, contributing to surging expansionist pressures. Business leaders, politicians, statesmen, and editorial writers insisted that national greatness required that America match Europe's imperial expansion. Fanned by sensationalistic newspaper coverage of a Cuban struggle for independence, war between the United States and Spain broke out in 1898.

Roots of Expansionist Sentiment

Ever since the first European settlers had colonized North America's Atlantic coast, the newcomers had been an expansionist people. By the 1840s, the push westward had acquired a name: Manifest Destiny. Directed inward after 1865 toward the settlement of the trans-Mississippi West (see Chapter 17), this impulse turned outward in the 1880s as Americans followed the imperial example set by Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, and Japan. National greatness, it appeared, demanded an empire.

Many business leaders believed that continued domestic prosperity required overseas markets. Foreign markets offered a safety valve for potentially explosive pressures in the U.S. economy. Proponents of a strong navy further fueled the expansionist mood. In *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* (1890), **Alfred Thayer Mahan** equated sea power with national greatness and urged a rapid U.S. naval buildup, which required overseas bases. Meanwhile, some religious leaders proclaimed America's mission was to spread Christianity, an argument with racist tinges. One minister averred that "God is training the Anglo-Saxon race for its mission"—a mission of bringing Christianity and civilization to the world's "weaker races."

A group of Republican expansionists, led by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, diplomat John Hay, and Theodore Roosevelt of New York, preached imperial greatness and military might. "I should welcome almost any war," declared Roosevelt in 1897; "... this country needs one." Such advocates of expansionism built upon Social Darwinist rhetoric of the day and argued that war, as a vehicle for natural selection, would test and refurbish American manhood, restore honor, and create a new generation of civic-minded Americans. This gendered appeal both counterbalanced concerns about women's political activism and helped forge the disparate arguments for expansionism into a simple, visceral plea that had a broad appeal.

A series of diplomatic skirmishes in the mid-1890s revealed the newly assertive American mood. In the mid-1880s, quarrels between the United States and Great Britain had flared over fishing rights in the North Atlantic and North Pacific, reawakening latent anti-British feelings and the old dream of acquiring Canada.

In 1898, a compromise settled the fishing rights dispute, but by then attention had shifted to Latin America. In 1891, tensions had flared between the United States and Chile after a mob in Valparaiso (**val-puh-RYE-zoh**) killed two American sailors

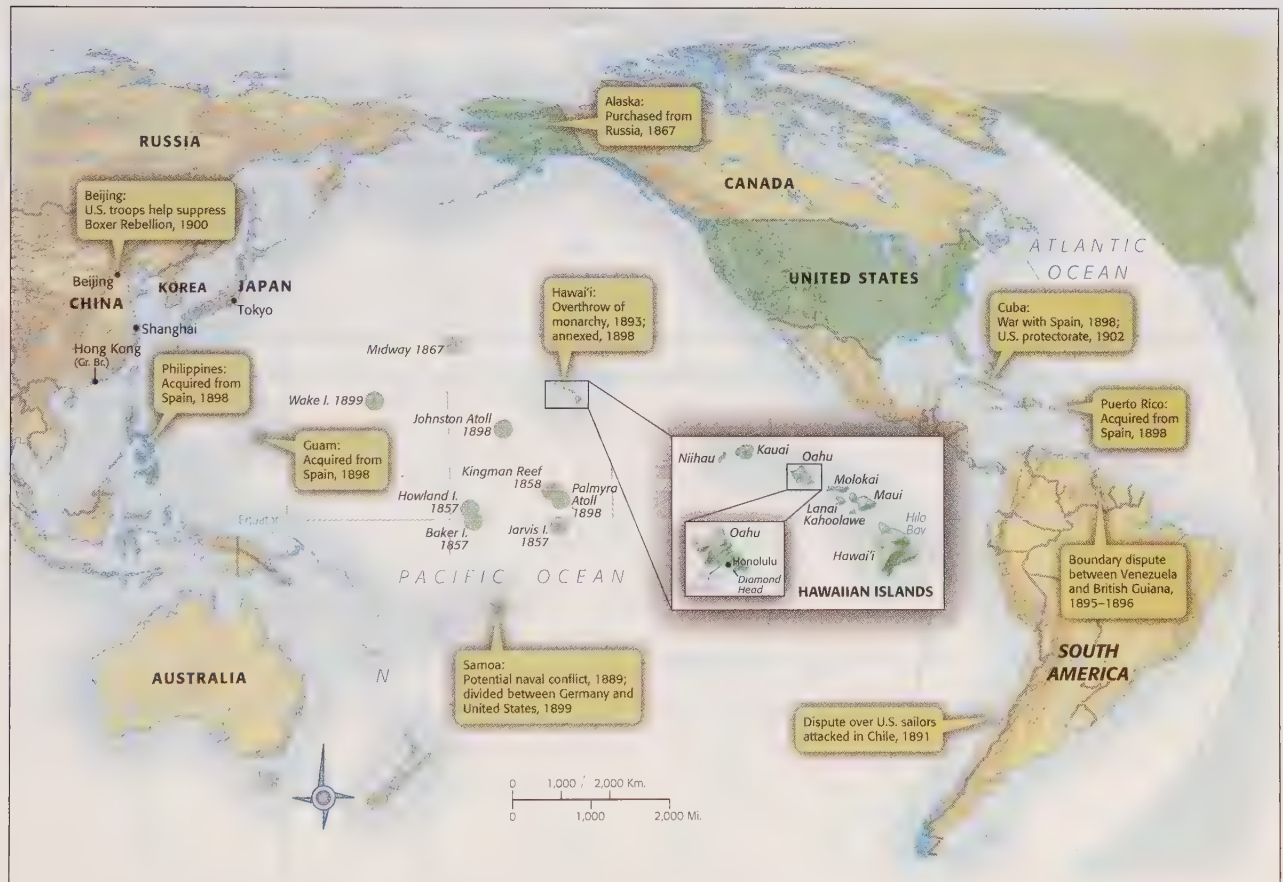
Alfred Thayer Mahan Leading proponent of imperialism and sea power

on shore leave. War fever subsided only when Chile apologized and paid an indemnity of \$75,000.

Another Latin American conflict arose from a boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana (**ghee-AHN-uh**) in 1895. When the British condescendingly rejected a U.S. arbitration offer, a livid Grover Cleveland asked Congress to set up a commission to settle the dispute even without Britain's approval. As patriotic fervor pulsed through the nation, the British in 1897 accepted the commission's findings.

Pacific Expansion

Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy focused on the Samoan (**suh-MOH-un**) Islands in the South Pacific, where it sought the port of Pago Pago (**PON-go PON-go**) as a refueling station. In March 1889, the United States narrowly avoided a naval clash with Germany over the islands when a timely hurricane wrecked both fleets. Ultimately,



Map 20.2 U.S. Territorial Expansion in the Late Nineteenth Century

The major period of U.S. territorial expansion abroad came in a short burst of activity in the late 1890s, when newspapers and some politicians beat the drums for empire.

Hawaiian Islands Independent island nation in the Pacific Ocean annexed by the United States in 1898

America established a three-way protectorate over the islands with Germany and Great Britain.

The **Hawaiian Islands**, with their economic and strategic significance, also beckoned U.S. imperialists. American missionaries and merchants had been active in the islands since the end of the eighteenth century. American-owned sugar plantations worked by Chinese and Japanese laborers dominated the Hawaiian economy. Under an 1887 treaty, the United States built a naval base at Pearl Harbor, near Honolulu. Then in 1891, angered by American economic domination, islanders welcomed Liliuokalani (*lil-ee-oo-oh-ka-LAW-nee*) to the Hawaiian throne. Strong-willed and hostile toward Americans, she became queen amid a crisis set off by a U.S. decision in 1890 to tax Hawaiian sugar. Hawaiian sugar prices plunged 40 percent as a result. Facing ruin, the planters deposed the queen in January 1893, proclaimed the independent Republic of Hawai'i, and requested U.S. annexation.

The grab for Hawai'i troubled Cleveland, especially when an emissary whom he sent cast doubt on whether the Hawaiians desired annexation. But when McKinley succeeded Cleveland, annexation moved rapidly forward, and in 1898 Congress proclaimed Hawai'i an American territory. Sixty-one years later, it joined the Union as the fiftieth state (see Map 20.2).

Crisis over Cuba

In 1898 American attention shifted to Cuba, a nation ninety miles off Florida, where a rebellion against Spanish rule had erupted in 1895. American businessmen had \$50 million invested in the island and annually imported \$100 million in sugar and other products from Cuba. Revolutionary turmoil would jeopardize these interests. Neither the Cleveland nor the McKinley administration supported the rebellion.

But the rebels' cause aroused popular sympathy in the United States. This support increased with revelations that the Spanish commander in Cuba, Valeriano Weyler (*vah-lair-ee-AH-no WAY-ler*), was herding vast numbers of Cubans into squalid camps. Malnutrition and disease turned these camps into hellholes in which perhaps two hundred thousand Cubans died.

Fueling American anger was the sensationalized reporting of two competing New York newspapers, William Randolph Hearst's *Journal* and Joseph Pulitzer's *World*. The *Journal*'s color comic strip, "The Yellow Kid," provided a term for Hearst's debased editorial approach: yellow journalism. In the cutthroat battle for readers, both editors exploited the Cuban crisis, turning rumor into fact and detailing "Butcher" Weyler's atrocities. When a young Cuban woman was jailed for resisting a rape attempt by a Spanish officer, a Hearst reporter helped the woman escape and brought her triumphantly to New York.

In 1897 a new, more liberal Spanish government sought a peaceful solution to the Cuban crisis. However, Hearst and Pulitzer continued to inflame public opinion. On February 8, 1898, Hearst's *Journal* published a private letter from a Spanish diplomat describing McKinley as "weak." Irritation turned to outrage on February 15, 1898, when an explosion rocked the battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor, killing 226 American crewmen. Scholarly opinion about what caused the explosion is still divided, but a careful review of the evidence in 1998 concluded that a mine most

likely set off the ammunition explosion that sank the ship. Newspaper headlines at the time blamed the same cause and war spirit flared high.

Despite further Spanish concessions, on April 11, McKinley sent a war message to Congress, and legislators passed a joint resolution recognizing Cuba's independence and authorizing force to expel the Spanish. "The Teller Amendment, introduced by Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado, renounced any U.S. interest in "sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control" in Cuba and pledged that America would leave the island alone once independence was assured.

The Spanish-American War, 1898

The war with Spain involved only a few days of actual combat. Action began on May 1, 1898, when a U.S. fleet under Admiral George Dewey steamed into Manila (muh-NILL-uh) Bay in the Philippines and destroyed or captured all ten Spanish ships anchored there, at the cost of 1 American and 381 Spanish lives. In mid-August, U.S. troops occupied the capital, Manila.

In Cuba, the war's only significant land engagement took place on July 1, when American troops seized three strongly defended Spanish garrisons overlooking Santiago (sahn-tee-AH-go) on El Caney Hill, Kettleman's Hill, and San Juan (sahn wahn) Hill, respectively. Leading the volunteer "Rough Riders" unit at San Juan Hill was Theodore Roosevelt, getting his taste of war—and abundant publicity—at last. Two days later, the Spanish fleet in the Santiago harbor made a gallant but doomed attempt to break through the American blockade to the open sea. The U.S. Navy fired and sank their archaic vessels, killing 474 Spaniards and ending four hundred years of Spanish empire in America.

John Hay thought that it had been "a splendid little war," but many who served in Cuba found it far from splendid. They went into summer combat wearing heavy wool uniforms, received abysmal medical care, and died in droves from yellow fever, food poisoning, and malaria. The United States lost more than five thousand men in Cuba, but only 379 of them in combat.

The thousands of black troops who fought in Cuba encountered Jim Crow racism at assembly points in Georgia and their embarkation port in Tampa, Florida. In Tampa, taunted by whites and refused service at restaurants and bars, some black troops exploded in riotous rage on June 6. White troops from Georgia restored order. The transport ships that carried troops to Cuba were segregated, with black troops often confined to the lowest quarters in stifling heat and denied permission to mingle on deck with other units. Despite such encounters with racism, African-American troops served with distinction in Cuba, playing key roles in the battles of San Juan Hill and El Caney Hill.

The Spanish sought an armistice on July 17. In the peace treaty signed that December in Paris, Spain recognized Cuba's independence and, after a U.S. payment of \$20 million, ceded the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and the Pacific island of Guam to the United States. Americans now possessed an island empire stretching from the Caribbean to the Pacific.

From 1898 to 1902, the U.S. Army governed Cuba under the command of General Leonard Wood. Wood's administration improved public health, education, and sanitation but nevertheless violated the spirit of the 1898 Teller Amendment. The troops



National Archives

African-American Soldiers of the Tenth U.S. Cavalry in Cuba, July 1898

These men posed shortly after the capture of San Juan Hill. Black troops, known as buffalo soldiers, played an important role in the Spanish-American War, but they were subject to harassment and discrimination.

Platt Amendment Agreement to withdraw U.S. troops from Cuba; U.S. maintained a naval base

eventually withdrew, although the so-called **Platt Amendment** (1901), requested by the War Department, authorized the withdrawal only after Cuba agreed not to make any treaty with a foreign power limiting its independence and not to borrow beyond its means. The United States also reserved the right to intervene in Cuba and to establish a naval base there, Guantánamo (*gwan-TAHN-uh-moh*) Bay, near Santiago, which it still maintains. The Platt Amendment remained in force until 1934. U.S. investments in Cuba, some \$50 million in 1898, soared to \$500 million by 1920.

Critics of Empire

Some Americans had opposed imperialism for more than a decade, and the victories in Cuba and the Philippines did not bring universal praise. Although few in number, the critics were influential. Some of them, like Carl Schurz and E. L. Godkin, were former Mugwumps. Other anti-imperialists included William Jennings Bryan, settlement-house founder Jane Addams, novelist Mark Twain, and Harvard philosopher William James. Steel king Andrew Carnegie gave thousands of dollars to the cause. In 1898, these critics of empire formed the **Anti-Imperialist League**.

For the United States to rule other peoples, the anti-imperialists believed, was to violate the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The military fever that accompanied expansionism also dismayed the anti-imperialists.

Anti-Imperialist League Small but influential group that opposed imperialism

In February 1899, the anti-imperialists failed by one vote to prevent Senate ratification of the expansionist peace treaty with Spain. McKinley's overwhelming victory in 1900 over expansionist critic Bryan eroded the anti-imperialist cause. Nevertheless, at a time of jingoistic rhetoric and militaristic posturing, they had upheld an older and more traditional vision of America.

Guerrilla War in the Philippines, 1898–1902

Events in the Philippines confirmed the worst fears of the anti-imperialists. At the war's outset, few Americans knew much about the Philippines Islands. Without a map, McKinley later confessed, "I could not have told where those darn islands were within two thousand miles." American business, though, saw them as a steppingstone to the rich China market.

McKinley, reflecting the prevailing mood as always, reasoned that the Filipinos were unready for self-government and would be gobbled up if set adrift in a world of imperial rivalries. He further persuaded himself that American rule would enormously benefit a people he called "our little brown brothers." A devout Methodist, he explained that America's mission was "to educate the Filipinos, and to uplift and civilize and Christianize them." (In fact, most Filipinos were already Catholic, a legacy of centuries of Spanish rule.) Having prayerfully reached his decision, McKinley instructed the American peace negotiators in Paris to insist on U.S. acquisition of the Philippines.

"Uplifting" the Philippines proved difficult. In 1896 young **Emilio Aguinaldo** (eh-MEEL-ee-oh ah-gwin-ALL-doh) had organized a Filipino independence movement to drive out Spain. In the summer of 1898, with arms supplied by Admiral Dewey, Aguinaldo's forces captured most of Luzon (loo-ZAHN), the Philippines' main island. When the Spanish surrendered, Aguinaldo proclaimed Filipino independence and drafted a democratic constitution. In 1899, feeling betrayed when the peace treaty ceded his country to the United States, Aguinaldo ordered his rebel force to attack Manila, the American base of operations.

Emilio Aguinaldo Nationalist leader of the Filipino war against American occupation

These hostilities became the opening phase of a long guerrilla conflict. Before it ended, four thousand of the over 125,000 American men who served in the Philippines had been killed. In addition, as many as twenty thousand Filipino independence fighters died. As in the later Vietnam and Iraq wars, casualties and suffering ravaged the civilian population as well. Historians estimate that at least two hundred thousand civilians died in the conflict. Aguinaldo was captured in March 1901, but large-scale guerrilla fighting continued through the summer of 1902.

In 1902, a special Senate committee heard testimony from veterans of the Philippines war about the execution of prisoners, the torture of suspects, and the burning of villages. The humanitarian mood of 1898, when Americans had rushed to save Cuba from the cruel Spaniards, seemed remote indeed. In retrospect, the American troops' ambivalent attitudes toward the Filipinos, although deplorable, are not hard to understand. As American nationalism was reformulated in this cauldron of immigration, imperialism, and the "winning of the West," racist attitudes about native peoples and foreigners intermixed with rhetorical pleas for supervision and stewardship. In the process, as was evident in the treatment of American Indians (see Chapter 17), well-meaning paternalism often degenerated into deadly domination.

CHECKING IN

- Expansionist, and even warlike, sentiment flared in the 1890s.
- The United States took over Hawai'i after American planters deposed the rightful queen.
- The Spanish-American War was a popular assertion of rising American power.
- A small but vocal group criticized imperialism as a betrayal of American values.
- Acquisition of the Philippines from Spain led to a guerrilla war and the expansion of the American empire into the western Pacific.

The subjugation of the Philippines followed years of expansionism that proclaimed America's debut on the world stage. Nevertheless, most Americans remained ambivalent about the acquisition of territory. While anti-imperialist Mark Twain acidly condemned "the Blessings of Civilization Trust," labor leader Samuel Gompers warned that "an inundation of Mongolians" might steal jobs from white labor. White Americans recoiled from making the "barbarian peoples" of these territories a part of the United States. Deemed unfit to manage their own affairs, Filipinos were placed in a protective status that denied their independence but kept them under U.S. control.

Congress passed the Philippine Government Act in 1902, which vested authority in a governor general to be appointed by the president. The act also provided for an elected Filipino assembly and promised eventual self-government. Progress toward this goal inched forward, with intervals of semi-military rule. In 1946, nearly half a century after Admiral Dewey's guns had boomed in Manila Bay, independence finally came to the Philippines.

Chapter Summary

How did political parties build coalitions out of their diverse ethnic and regional constituencies? (page 471)

Both major national parties pursued centrist courses, with Republicans supporting big business and Democrats warning against government interference. Greenbacks and the coinage of silver were major issues, as was the patronage system and civil-service reform. As the parties struggled to achieve political dominance, they were forced to deal with ethnic, cultural, and racial issues that included prohibition, church schools, and segregation.

What factors prompted the rise of the Grange and the Farmers' Alliance movements? (page 477)

In the competition for new voters, the needs of rural Americans were often overlooked. Southern and western farmers struggled to overcome periodic droughts, falling prices, and a cycle of indebtedness. They created two regional organizations, the Grange and the Alliance, to try to reassert control over their lives. These movements led to the formation of the national Populist Party in 1892. Blacks were increasingly excluded from political life.

KEY TERMS

laissez-faire (p. 473)
 Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) (p. 473)
 political machine (p. 474)
 William "Magear" Tweed (p. 474)
 Sherman Silver Purchase Act (p. 475)
 Pendleton Civil Service Act (p. 476)
 Mugwumps (p. 477)
 Grange (p. 479)
 Farmers' Alliance (p. 479)
 Populist Party (p. 480)
 subtreasury plan (p. 480)
 lynching (p. 481)
 Plessy v. Ferguson (p. 481)

Why did William Jennings Bryan fail to win the presidency in 1896?
(page 483)

Corporate interests continued to dominate politics. Populists won more than a million votes in the 1892 election. The Panic of 1893 and the subsequent depression devastated individuals and led to political unrest, such as Coxey's army. The victory of Republican William McKinley over William Jennings Bryan in the 1896 presidential election undermined Populism as an organized movement. However, many of the movement's ideas were incorporated into the two larger parties. The victorious Republican coalition would control national politics for the next fifteen years.

Why did the United States go to war with Spain and become an imperial power? (page 488)

The 1890s saw a surge of expansionist and warlike (jingoistic) sentiment. The Spanish-American War gave the United States control in the Caribbean and expanded American power far into the western Pacific with the acquisition of the Philippines. A bitter guerrilla war in the Philippines showed American determination to keep the new U.S. empire, despite criticism from a vocal group of anti-imperialists.

KEY TERMS continued

Booker T. Washington (p. 482)

Panic of 1893 (p. 484)

William Jennings Bryan (p. 485)

Alfred Thayer Mahan (p. 488)

Hawaiian Islands (p. 490)

Platt Amendment (p. 492)

Anti-Imperialist League (p. 492)

Emilio Aguinaldo (p. 493)



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The Progressive Era

1900–1917

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Progressives and Their Ideas

How did intellectuals, novelists, and journalists inspire the progressive movement?

Grass-Roots Progressivism

How did state and local progressives seek to reform cities and the new industrial order?

Blacks, Women, and Workers Organize

How did progressives try to control morality, and how did they view immigrants and blacks?

National Progressivism Phase I: Roosevelt and Taft, 1901–1913

What strategies did African-Americans, women, and industrial workers use to improve their lot?

National Progressivism Phase II: Woodrow Wilson, 1913–1917

As progressivism became a national movement, what issues proved most important?



Mulberry Street on New York City's Lower East Side, Around 1900

It was late Saturday afternoon on March 25, 1911. At the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in New York City, hundreds of young women and a few men remained at work at their clattering sewing machines. Suddenly fire broke out. Feeding on bolts of cloth, the fire soon turned the upper floors into an inferno. Panicked workers found some of the doors locked. Other doors that opened inward (a fire-law violation) were jammed shut by the crush of people trying to get out.

A few workers escaped. Young Pauline Grossman crawled to safety across a narrow alleyway when three male employees formed a human bridge. As others tried to cross, however, the weight became

too great, and all fell to their deaths. Dozens of workers leaped from the windows to certain death below. Sunday's headlines summed up the grim count: 141 dead.

The horrifying Triangle fire underscored what many citizens had long recognized. Industrialization, for all its benefits, had taken a heavy toll on American life. Many factory workers and slum-dwellers endured a desperate cycle of poverty, exhausting labor, and early death. After the Triangle tragedy, New York passed a series of laws regulating factories and protecting workers.

Growing concerns about industrialization, urban growth, and the rise of great corporations prompted a wave of reform that came to be called the progressive movement. The progressive movement was a response to vast changes that had erased the familiar contours of an older America. In contrast to the rural Populists (see Chapter 20), progressives concentrated on the social effects of the new urban-industrial order.

Emerging in the 1890s at the city and state levels, an array of organizations, many led by women, pursued varied reform objectives. As journalists, novelists, religious leaders, social thinkers, and politicians joined in, these grass-roots efforts evolved into a national movement. By 1917, when reform gave way to war, America's political and social landscape had been transformed. New laws, organizations, and regulatory agencies had arisen to address the consequences of helter-skelter urbanization, industrial expansion, and corporate growth. The progressives could be maddeningly moralistic. They had their blind spots (especially on such subjects as immigration and race), and their reforms didn't always work as planned. But, on balance, their achievements left a powerful legacy.

PROGRESSIVES AND THEIR IDEAS

How did intellectuals, novelists, and journalists inspire the progressive movement?

As the twentieth century dawned, groups across the nation grappled with the problems of the new urban-industrial order. Workers protested unsafe and exhausting jobs. Experts investigated social conditions. Women's clubs embraced reform. Intellectuals challenged the ideological foundations of a business-dominated social order, and journalists exposed municipal corruption and industrialism's human toll. Activists tried to make government more democratic, eradicate dangerous conditions in cities and factories, and curb corporate power.

Historians have grouped all these efforts under a single label: "the progressive movement." In fact, "progressivism" was less a single movement than a spirit of discontent with the status quo and an exciting sense of new social possibilities.

The Many Faces of Progressivism

Who were the progressives, and what reforms did they pursue? To answer this, we must examine the social changes of the era. Along with immigration, a growing middle class transformed U.S. cities. From the men and women of this class—most of them native born, white, and Protestant—came many of the progressive movement's leaders and supporters.

From 1900 to 1920, the white-collar work force jumped from 5.1 million to 10.5 million—more than double the growth rate of the labor force as a whole. This burgeoning white-collar class included corporate executives and small-business owners; secretaries, accountants, and sales clerks; civil engineers and people in advertising; and professionals such as lawyers, physicians, and teachers. Ambitious, well-educated, and valuing social stability, members of the new middle class were eager to make their influence felt.

For middle-class women, the city offered both opportunities and frustrations. Some became schoolteachers, secretaries, clerks, and telephone operators. The number of women in such white-collar jobs, as well as the ranks of college-educated women, more than tripled from 1900 to 1920. But for middle-class married women caring for homes and children, city life could bring stress and loneliness. The divorce rate rose from one in twelve marriages in 1900 to one in nine by 1916. As we shall see, middle-class women joined female white-collar workers and college graduates in leading a revived women's movement. Cultural commentators wrote nervously of the "New Woman."



Women Enter the Labor Force

Young female workers take an exercise break at the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, Ohio, around 1900. From schools and hospitals to corporate offices and crowded sweatshops, women poured into the work force in the early twentieth century.



Chronology

1900	International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) founded; Carrie Chapman Catt becomes president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA)
1901	Assassination of McKinley; Theodore Roosevelt becomes president; J. P. Morgan forms United States Steel Company
1903	W. E. B. Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> ; Wright brothers' flight
1904	Theodore Roosevelt elected president in his own right; Lincoln Steffens, <i>The Shame of the Cities</i>
1905	Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) organized
1906	Upton Sinclair, <i>The Jungle</i>
1907	William James, <i>Pragmatism</i>
1908	William Howard Taft elected president; Model T Ford introduced
1909	Bullinger-Pinchot controversy; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) founded; Herbert Croly, <i>The Promise of American Life</i>
1910	Insurgents curb power of House Speaker Joseph Cannon
1911	Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire
1912	Republican Party split; Progressive (Bull Moose) Party founded; Woodrow Wilson elected president
1913	Sixteenth Amendment (Congress empowered to tax incomes); Seventeenth Amendment (direct election of U.S. senators)
1914	American Social Hygiene Association founded; Narcotics Act
1915	D. W. Griffith, <i>The Birth of a Nation</i>
1916	Margaret Sanger opens nation's first birth-control clinic; National Park Service created; Louis Brandeis appointed to Supreme Court
1919	Eighteenth Amendment (national prohibition)
1920	Nineteenth Amendment (woman suffrage)

This urban middle class rallied to the banner of reform. The initial reform impetus came not from political parties but from women's clubs, settlement houses, and private groups with names like the Playground Association of America and the American League for Civic Improvement.

However, the native-born middle class was not alone in promoting reform. On issues affecting factory workers and slum-dwellers, the urban-immigrant political machines—and workers themselves—often took the initiative. Some corporate leaders helped shape regulatory measures in ways to serve their interests.

What, then, was progressivism? Fundamentally, it was a broad-based response to industrialization and its social byproducts: immigration, urban growth, growing corporate power, and widening class divisions. In contrast to populism, progressivism's strength lay in the cities. Finally, most progressives were *reformers*, not radicals. They wished to make the new urban-industrial order more humane, not overturn it entirely.

But what specific remedies were required? Reaching different answers to this key question, progressive reformers spawned an array of activities that sometimes overlapped, sometimes diverged. Many demanded stricter business regulation, from local transit companies to the almighty trusts. Others focused on protecting workers and the urban poor. Still others championed reform of municipal government.

Some, fearful of urban disorder, favored immigration restriction or social-control strategies to regulate city-dwellers' behavior. All this contributed to the mosaic of progressive reform.

Progressives had a high regard for science and expert knowledge. Since scientific and technological expertise had produced the new industrial order, such expertise could surely also correct the social problems spawned by industrialism. Progressives marshaled research data, surveys, and statistics to support their various causes. Nevertheless, human emotion—whether indignation over child labor, suspicion of corporate power, or raw political ambition—helped to drive the movement forward.

Intellectuals Offer New Social Views

A group of innovative social thinkers provided progressivism's underlying ideas. As we have seen, some Gilded Age intellectuals had argued that Charles Darwin's theory of evolution justified unrestrained economic competition. In the 1880s and 1890s, sociologist Lester Ward, utopian novelist Edward Bellamy, and leaders of the Social Gospel movement had all attacked this harsh version of Social Darwinism (see Chapters 18 and 19). This attack intensified after 1900.

Economist Thorstein Veblen satirized America's newly rich capitalists in *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899). Dissecting their lifestyle the way an anthropologist might study an exotic tribe, he argued that they built mansions, threw elaborate parties, and otherwise engaged in "conspicuous consumption" to flaunt their wealth and assert their claims to superiority.

The Harvard philosopher William James argued in *Pragmatism* (1907) that truth emerges not from abstract theorizing but from the experience of coping with life's realities through practical action. James's philosophy of pragmatism deepened reformers' skepticism toward the older generation's entrenched ideas and strengthened their belief in the necessity of social change.

Herbert Croly shared this faith that new ideas could transform society. In *The Promise of American Life* (1909), he called for an activist government of the kind advocated by Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the treasury. But rather than serving the interests of the business class, as Hamilton had proposed, Croly argued that this activist government should promote the welfare of all. In 1914, Croly founded the *New Republic* magazine to promote progressive ideas.

The settlement-house leader Jane Addams also helped shape the ideology of the Progressive Era. In *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1902) and other books, Addams rejected the claim that unrestrained competition offered the best path to social progress. Instead, she argued, in a modern industrial society, each individual's well-being depends on the well-being of all. Teaching by example, Addams made her Chicago social settlement, Hull House, a center of social activism and legislative-reform initiatives.

With public-school enrollment growing from about 7 million in 1870 to more than 23 million in 1920, philosopher John Dewey saw schools as potent engines of social change. Banishing bolted-down chairs and desks from his model school at the University of Chicago, Dewey encouraged pupils to interact. The ideal school, he said in *Democracy and Education* (1916), would be an "embryonic community" where children would learn to live as members of a social group.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., of Harvard Law School focused on changing judicial thinking. In *The Common Law* (1881), Holmes criticized judges who interpreted the

law rigidly to protect corporate interests and insisted that law must evolve as society changes. In a phrase much quoted by progressives, he declared, “The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience.” Appointed to the United States Supreme Court in 1902, Holmes often dissented from the conservative Court majority. As the new social thinking took hold, the courts slowly grew more open to reform legislation.

Novelists, Journalists, and Artists Spotlight Social Problems

While reform-minded intellectuals reoriented American social thought, novelists and journalists chronicled corporate wrongdoing, municipal corruption, slum conditions, and industrial abuses.

In his novel *The Octopus* (1901), Frank Norris of San Francisco portrayed the epic struggle between California railroad barons and the state’s wheat growers. Theodore Dreiser’s novel *The Financier* (1912) featured a hard-driving business tycoon utterly lacking a social conscience. Like Veblen’s *Theory of the Leisure Class*, such works aroused sentiment against the industrial elite and in favor of tougher regulation of business.

Mass magazines such as *McClure’s* and *Collier’s* stirred reform energies with articles exposing urban corruption and corporate wrongdoing. President Theodore Roosevelt criticized the authors as “**muckrakers**” obsessed with the seamier side of American life, but the name became a badge of honor. Journalist Lincoln Steffens began the exposé vogue in 1902 with a *McClure’s* article documenting municipal corruption in St. Louis.

To gather material, some journalists worked as factory laborers or lived in slum tenements. The British immigrant John Spargo researched his 1906 book about child labor, *The Bitter Cry of the Children*, by visiting mines in Pennsylvania and West Virginia and attempting to do the work that young boys performed for ten hours a day, picking out slate and other refuse from coal in cramped workspaces filled with choking coal dust. Some magazine exposés later appeared in book form, including Lincoln Steffens’s *The Shame of the Cities* (1904) and Ida Tarbell’s damning *History of the Standard Oil Company* (1904).

Artists and photographers played a role as well. A group of New York painters dubbed the Ashcan School portrayed the harshness as well as the vitality of slum life. The photographer Lewis Hine, working for the National Child Labor Committee, captured haunting images of child workers with stunted bodies and worn expressions.

“muckrakers” Journalists and novelists who wrote about urban corruption and wrongdoing

CHECKING IN

- The new middle class was an important part of the progressive movement; so, too, were urban workers and, occasionally, political machines and corporate leaders.
- Progressivism was a response to the massive changes spawned by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration.
- The progressives were reformers who wanted to save, not to overthrow, the existing capitalist system.
- Intellectuals like William James, Herbert Croly, and John Dewey provided the foundation for progressive reforms, emphasizing the power of new ideas and purposeful effort in bettering society.
- Muckraking authors and journalists played a major role in unveiling problems and stirring the public to demand solutions.

GRASS-ROOTS PROGRESSIVISM

How did state and local progressives seek to reform cities and the new industrial order?

Middle-class readers also observed firsthand, in their own communities, the problems besetting urban-industrial America. In fact, the progressive movement began with grass-roots campaigns at the local level from New York to San Francisco. Eventually, these local efforts came together in a powerful national movement.

Reforming the Political Process

Beginning in the 1890s, native-born elites and middle-class reformers battled corrupt city governments (see Chapter 19). New York City experienced a succession of reform spasms in which Protestant clergy rallied against Tammany Hall, the city's entrenched Democratic organization. In Detroit, the reform mayor Hazen Pingree (served 1890–1897) brought honesty to city hall, lowered transit fares, and provided public baths and other services.

In San Francisco, a courageous newspaper editor led a 1907 crusade against the city's corrupt boss. When the original prosecutor was gunned down in court, attorney Hiram Johnson took his place, winning convictions against the boss and his cronies. Johnson rode his newly won fame to the California governorship and the U.S. Senate. In Toledo, Ohio, a colorful figure named Samuel M. ("Golden Rule") Jones led the reform crusade. A businessman converted to the Social Gospel, Jones introduced profit sharing in his factory, and as mayor he established playgrounds, free kindergartens, and lodging houses for homeless transients.

The political reformers soon moved beyond simply "throwing the rascals out" to probing the roots of urban misgovernment, including the private monopolies that ran municipal water, gas, electricity, and transit systems. Reformers passed laws regulating the rates that utilities could charge, taxing them more equitably, and curbing their political influence. Some advocated public ownership of utilities.

Reflecting the Progressive Era vogue of expertise and efficiency, a number of municipal reformers sought to substitute professional managers and administrators, chosen in citywide elections, for mayors and aldermen elected on a ward-by-ward basis. Supposedly above politics, these experts were to run the city like an efficient business.

Municipal reform attracted different groups depending on the issue. The native-born middle class provided the initial impetus for urban beautification and political reform. Business leaders often supported city-manager systems and citywide elections, which diminished the power of the ward bosses and increased that of the corporate elite. On practical matters, such as municipal services, immigrants and even political bosses supported reform.

The electoral-reform movement soon expanded to the state level. By 1910, all states had instituted secret ballots, making it much harder than before to rig elections. The direct primary, introduced in Wisconsin in 1903, enabled rank-and-file voters rather than party bosses to select their parties' candidates for public office. And some western states inaugurated the initiative, referendum, and recall. By an initiative, voters were able to instruct the legislature to consider a specific bill. In a referendum, citizens were actually able to enact a law or, in a *nonbinding* referendum, express their views on a measure. By a recall petition, voters were able to remove an official from office by gathering enough signatures.

While these reforms aimed to democratize voting, party leaders and interest groups soon learned to manipulate the new electoral machinery. Ironically, the new procedures may have weakened party loyalty and reduced voter interest. Voter-participation rates dropped steeply in these years, while political activity by organized interest groups increased.

Regulating Business and Protecting Workers

The corporate consolidation that produced giants like Carnegie Steel and Standard Oil (see Chapter 18) continued after 1900. Following the U.S. Steel pattern, J. P. Morgan in 1902 combined six competing companies into the International Harvester Company, which dominated the farm-implement business. The General Motors Company, formed in 1908 by William C. Durant, bought up various independent automobile manufacturers, from the inexpensive Chevrolet to the luxury Cadillac.

Many workers benefited from this corporate growth. Industrial workers' average annual real wages (defined in terms of actual purchasing power) rose from \$487 in 1900 to \$687 by 1915. In railroading and other unionized industries, wages climbed still higher. Still, such wages could barely support a family.

To survive, entire families went to work. Two-thirds of young immigrant women entered the labor force in the early 1900s, working in factories, laundries, or bakeries, or as domestics. Even children worked. In 1910, the nonfarm labor force included some 1.6 million children aged ten to fifteen employed in factories, mills, tenement sweatshops, and street trades such as shoe shining and newspaper vending.

Work was long and hazardous. Despite the eight-hour workday movement of the 1880s, in 1900 the average worker still toiled nine-and-a-half hours a day. Some southern textile mills required workdays of twelve or thirteen hours. In one typical year (1907), 4,534 railroad workers and more than three thousand miners were killed on the job. Few workers enjoyed vacations or retirement benefits.

Workers accustomed to the rhythms of farm labor faced the discipline of the factory. Efficiency experts used time-and-motion studies to increase production and make human workers as predictable as machines. In *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911), Frederick W. Taylor explained how to increase output by standardizing job routines and rewarding the fastest workers. "Efficiency" became a popular catchword, but workers resented the pressures to speed up.

Americans concerned about the social implications of industrialization deplored unregulated corporate power and the hazards facing industrial workers. The drive to regulate big business, inherited from the populists, became an important component of progressivism. Since corporations had benefited from government policies such as high protective tariffs and railroad subsidies, reformers reasoned, they should also be subject to government regulation.

Wisconsin, under Governor **Robert** ("Fighting Bob") **La Follette** (lah FALL-ett), took the lead in regulating railroads, mines, and other businesses. As a Republican congressman, La Follette had feuded with the state's conservative party leadership, and in 1900 he won the governorship as an independent. Challenging powerful corporate interests, La Follette and his administration adopted the direct-primary system, set up a railroad regulatory commission, increased corporate taxes, and limited campaign spending. Reflecting progressivism's faith in experts, La Follette consulted reform-minded professors at the University of Wisconsin and set up a legislative reference library to help lawmakers draft bills. La Follette's reforms gained national attention as the "Wisconsin Idea."

If electoral reform and corporate regulation represented the brain of progressivism, the impulse to improve conditions in factories and mills represented its

Robert La Follette Progressive politician; won Wisconsin governorship as independent and oversaw several reforms; later a U.S. senator



The Triangle Fire

The bodies of Triangle Shirtwaist factory workers who jumped from the burning building occupy the sidewalk.

heart. This movement, too, began at the local and state level. By 1907, for example, thirty states had outlawed child labor. A 1903 Oregon law limited women in industry to a ten-hour workday.

Campaigns for industrial safety and better working conditions won support from political bosses in the immigrant cities. State senator Robert F. Wagner, a leader of New York City's Democratic organization, headed the Triangle-fire investigation. Thanks to his committee's efforts, New York passed fifty-six worker-protection laws, including required fire-safety inspections. By 1914, twenty-five states had made employers liable for job-related injuries or deaths.

Florence Kelley of Hull House, the daughter of a conservative Republican congressman, spearheaded the drive to remedy industrial abuses. In 1893, Kelley persuaded the Illinois legislature to outlaw child labor and limit working hours

for women. In 1899, she became head of the National Consumers' League, which mobilized consumer pressure for improved factory conditions. Campaigning for a federal child-labor law, Kelley asked, "Why are seals, bears, reindeer, fish, wild game in the national parks, buffalo, [and] migratory birds all found suitable for federal protection, but not children?"

Like many progressive reforms, the crusade for workplace safety relied on expert research. The bacteriologist Alice Hamilton, a pioneer in the new field of "industrial hygiene," reported on lead poisoning among industrial workers in 1910. Later, as an investigator for the U.S. Bureau of Labor, Hamilton publicized other work-related medical hazards.

Workers themselves, who well understood the hazards of their jobs, provided further pressure for reform. For example, when the granite industry introduced new power drills that created a fine dust that workers inhaled, the *Granite Cutters' Journal* called them "widow makers." Sure enough, investigators soon linked the dust to a deadly lung disease, silicosis.

Making Cities More Livable

By 1920, the urban population passed the 50 percent mark, and sixty-eight U.S. cities boasted more than a hundred thousand inhabitants. New York City grew by 2.2 million from 1900 to 1920, and Chicago by 1 million. America had become an urban nation.

Political corruption was only one of many urban problems. As manufacturing and businesses grew, a tide of immigrants and native-born newcomers engulfed the

cities. Many cities became congested human warehouses, lacking adequate parks, public-health resources, and basic municipal services. As the reform spirit spread, the urban crisis loomed large.

Extending the achievements of Frederick Law Olmsted and others (see Chapter 11), reformers campaigned for parks, boulevards, and street lights, and proposed laws against billboards and unsightly overhead electrical wires. An influential voice for city planning and beautification was Daniel Burnham, chief architect of the 1893 Chicago world's fair. Burnham developed beautification plans for Washington, DC, Cleveland, San Francisco, and other cities. Many Progressive Era urban planners shared Burnham's faith that more beautiful cities and imposing public buildings would produce orderly, law-abiding citizens.

The municipal reform impulse also included such practical goals as decent housing and better garbage collection and street cleaning. Providing a model for other cities and states, the New York legislature imposed strict health and safety regulations on tenements in 1911. With the discovery in the 1880s that germs cause diseases like cholera and typhoid fever, municipal hygiene became a high priority. Reformers distributed public-health information, promoted school vaccination programs, and called for safer water and sewer systems and the regulation of food and milk suppliers. When Mary Mallon, an Irish-immigrant cook in New York, was found to be a healthy carrier of the typhoid bacillus in 1907, she was confined by the city health authorities and demonized in the press as "Typhoid Mary."

These efforts bore fruit. From 1900 to 1920, infant mortality (defined as death in the first year of life), as well as death rates from tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and other infectious or communicable diseases, all fell sharply.

Urban reformers shared the era's heightened environmental consciousness (see Chapter 17). Factory chimneys belching smoke had once inspired pride, but by the early 1900s physicians had linked factory smoke to respiratory problems, and civic reformers were deploring the soot and smoke spewing from coal-fueled factory steam boilers.

The antismoke campaign combined expertise with activism. Civil engineers formed the Smoke Prevention Association in 1906, and researchers at the University of Pittsburgh documented the hazards and costs of air pollution. As women's clubs and other civic groups embraced the cause, many cities passed smoke-abatement laws. But coal still provided 70 percent of the nation's energy as late as 1920, and railroads and corporations fought back in the courts and often won. Not until years later, with the shift to other energy sources, did municipal air pollution significantly diminish.

Moral Control in the Cities

Progressives' belief that they could improve society through research, legislation, and aroused public opinion sprang from their confidence that they knew what was best for other people. While municipal corruption, unsafe factories, and corporate abuses captured their attention, so, too, did issues of personal behavior, particularly the behavior of immigrants. The problems they addressed deserved attention, but their self-righteous rhetoric and the remedies they proposed also betrayed an impulse to impose their own moral standards by force of law.

Despite the slums, dangerous factories, and other problems, early-twentieth-century cities also offered fun and diversion. Department stores, vaudeville, music halls, and amusement parks (see Chapter 19) continued to flourish. Although some vaudeville owners sought respectability, bawdy routines typically full of sexual innuendo delighted working-class audiences. Amusement parks offered families escape from tenements, and gave female workers an opportunity to socialize with friends, meet young men, and show off new outfits. New York City's amusement park, Coney Island, attracted several million visitors a year by 1914.

With electrification, streetcar rides or evening strolls down well-lit downtown streets became leisure activities in themselves. Orville and Wilbur Wright's successful airplane flight in 1903, and the introduction of Henry Ford's Model T in 1908, transforming the automobile from a toy of the rich to a vehicle for the masses, foretold exciting changes ahead, with cities central to the action.

Jaunty music-hall songs added to the vibrancy of city life. The blues, rooted in the chants of southern black sharecroppers, reached a broader public with such songs as W. C. Handy's classic "St. Louis Blues" (1914). Ragtime, another import from the black South (see Chapter 19), enjoyed great popularity in early-twentieth-century urban America.

These years also brought a new entertainment medium—the movies. Initially a part of vaudeville shows, movies soon migrated to five-cent halls called "nickelodeons" in immigrant neighborhoods. At first featuring brief comic sequences like *The Sneeze* or *The Kiss*, movies began to tell stories with *The Great Train Robbery* (1903). *A Fool There Was* (1914), with its daring line, "Kiss me, my fool!" made Theda Bara the first female movie star. The British music-hall performer Charlie Chaplin immigrated to America and appeared in some sixty short comedies between 1914 and 1917. Like amusement parks, the movies allowed immigrant youth briefly to escape parental supervision.

The diversions that eased city life for the poor struck some middle-class reformers as moral traps. Fearful of immorality and social disorder, reformers campaigned to regulate amusement parks, dance halls, movies, and the darkened nickelodeons, which they saw as potential dens of vice. Several states and cities set up film censorship boards, and the Supreme Court upheld such measures in 1915.

Building on the moral purity crusade of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) and other groups (see Chapter 19), reformers also targeted prostitution, a major urban problem. Male procurers lured young women into prostitution and then took a share of their income. The paltry wages paid to women for factory work or domestic service diverted many to this more lucrative occupation. Why "get up at 6:30 . . . and work in a close stuffy room . . . until dark for \$6 or \$7 a week," reasoned one prostitute, when an afternoon with a man could bring in more.

As prostitution came to symbolize the larger moral dangers of cities, a "white slave" hysteria gripped the nation amid warnings of farm girls' being kidnapped and forced into urban brothels. In the usual progressive fashion, investigators gathered statistics on what they called "the social evil." The American Social Hygiene Association (1914), financed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., sponsored medical research on sexually transmitted diseases, paid for "vice investigations" in various cities, and drafted antiprostitution laws. The federal Mann Act (1910) made it illegal to transport a woman across a state line "for immoral purposes." Amid much fanfare, reformers shut down the red-light districts of New Orleans, Chicago, and other cities.

In 1913, the African-American boxer Jack Johnson, the heavyweight champion, was convicted under the Mann Act; Johnson went abroad to escape imprisonment.

Battling Alcohol and Drugs

Temperance had long been part of the American reform agenda, but reformers' tactics and objectives changed in the Progressive Era. Most earlier campaigns had urged individuals to give up drink. The powerful **Anti-Saloon League (ASL)**, founded in 1895, shifted the emphasis to legislating a ban on the sale of alcoholic beverages, and its presses produced propaganda touting prohibition. As churches and temperance groups worked for prohibition at the municipal, county, and state levels, the ASL moved to its larger goal: national prohibition.

This was a heavy-drinking era, and alcohol abuse did indeed contribute to domestic abuse, health problems, and work injuries. But like the antiprostitution crusade, the prohibition campaign pitted native-born citizens against immigrants. Although it raised legitimate issues, the ASL also embodied Protestant America's impulse to control the immigrant city.

Reformers also targeted drug abuse—and for good reason. Physicians, patent-medicine peddlers, and legitimate drug companies freely prescribed or sold opium (derived from poppies) and its derivatives morphine and heroin. Cocaine, extracted from coca leaves, was an ingredient of Coca-Cola until about 1900.

Amid mounting reform pressure, Congress in 1914 passed the Harrison Act, banning the distribution of heroin, morphine, cocaine, and other addictive drugs except by licensed physicians or pharmacists. Like progressives' environmental concerns, this campaign anticipated an issue that remains important today. But this reform, too, had racist undertones. Antidrug crusaders luridly described Chinese "opium dens" (places where this addictive narcotic was smoked) and warned that "drug-crazed Negroes" imperiled white womanhood.

Immigration Restriction and Eugenics

Although many of the new city-dwellers came from farms and small towns, the main source of urban growth continued to be immigration. More than 17 million newcomers arrived from 1900 to 1917, and most settled in cities. As in the 1890s (see Chapter 19), the influx came mainly from southern and eastern Europe, but some 200,000 Japanese, 40,000 Chinese, and thousands of Mexicans also arrived between 1900 and 1920.

The obvious answer to the threats posed by the immigrant city, some reformers concluded, lay in excluding immigrants (see Figure 21.1). The many progressives who supported immigration restriction documented their case with alleged scientific expertise. For example, a 1911 congressional report allegedly proved the new immigrants' innate degeneracy. One prominent sociologist described the newcomers as "low-browed, big-faced persons of obviously low mentality." In 1896, 1913, and 1915, Congress passed literacy-test bills aimed at slowing immigration, but they fell victim to veto by a succession of presidents. These measures would have excluded immigrants over sixteen years old who could not read either English or their native language. In 1917, however, such a bill became law over President Wilson's veto.

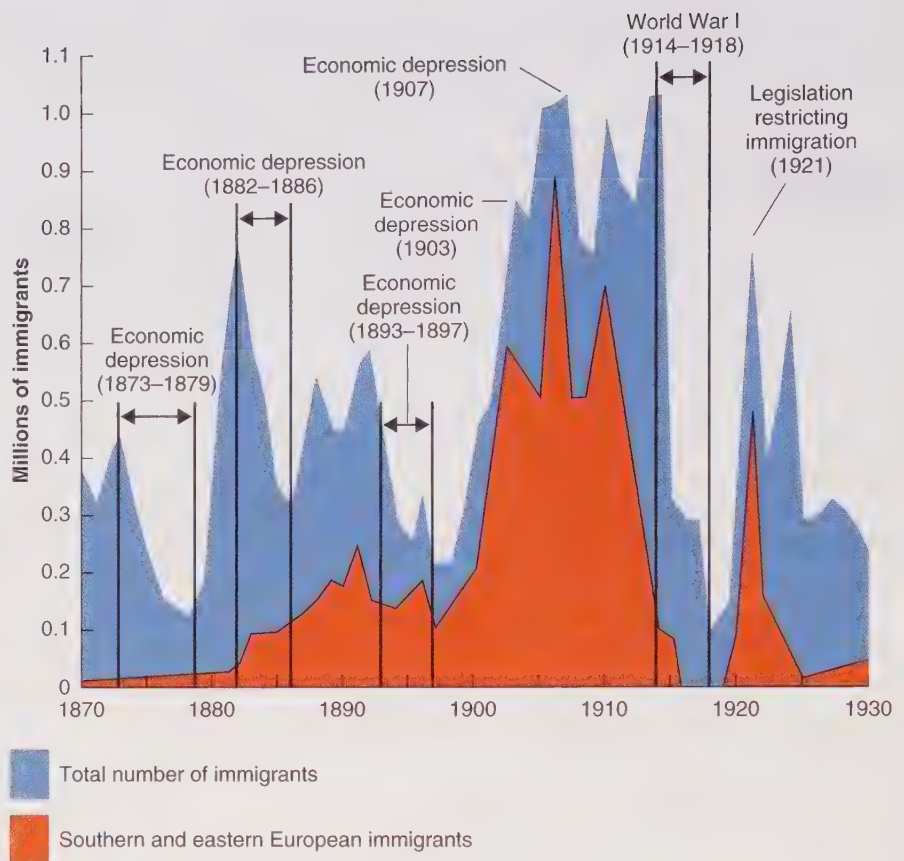
Anti-Saloon League (ASL)

Political advocacy group founded in 1895; signaled a new phase in the movement to ban the sale of alcohol

Figure 21.1 Immigration to the United States, 1870–1930

With the end of the depression of the 1890s, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe poured into America's cities, spurring an immigration restriction movement, urban moral-control campaigns, and efforts to improve the physical and social conditions of immigrant life.

Sources: *Statistical History of the United States from Colonial Times to the Present* (Stamford, Conn.: Fairfield Publishers, 1965); and report presented by Senator William P. Dillingham, Senate document 742, 61st Congress, 3rd session, December 5, 1910: Abstracts of Reports to the Immigration Commission.



Anti-immigrant fears helped fuel the eugenics (*you-JEN-icks*) movement. Eugenics is the control of reproduction to alter a plant or animal species, and some U.S. eugenicists believed that human society could be improved by this means. Leading eugenicists urged immigration restriction to protect America from “inferior” genetic stock.

In *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916), Madison Grant, a prominent progressive and eugenics advocate, used bogus data to denounce immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, especially Jews. He also viewed African-Americans as inferior. Anticipating the program of Adolf Hitler in the 1930s (covered in Chapter 25), Grant called for racial segregation, immigration restriction, and the forced sterilization of the “unfit,” including “worthless race types.” The vogue of eugenics gave “scientific” respectability to racism and anti-immigrant sentiment. Inspired by eugenics, many states legalized the sterilization of criminals, sex offenders, and persons adjudged mentally deficient.

Racism and Progressivism

Progressivism arose at a time of intense racism in America as well of major African-American population movements. These racial realities are crucial to a full understanding of the movement.

In 1900, more than two-thirds of the nation's 10 million blacks lived in the South as sharecroppers and tenant farmers. By 1910, the cotton boll weevil and ruinous floods had driven 20 percent of these southern blacks into cities. Black men in the cities took jobs in factories, mines, docks, and railroads or became carpenters or bricklayers. Many black women became domestic servants, seamstresses, and laundry or tobacco workers. By 1910, 54 percent of America's black women held jobs.

Across the South, legally enforced racism peaked in the early twentieth century. Local "Jim Crow" laws segregated streetcars, schools, parks, and even cemeteries. The facilities for blacks, including the schools, were invariably inferior. Many southern cities imposed residential segregation by law until the Supreme Court restricted such measures in 1917. Most labor unions excluded black workers. Disfranchised and trapped in a cycle of poverty, poor education, and discrimination, southern blacks faced bleak prospects.

Fleeing such conditions, two hundred thousand blacks migrated north between 1890 and 1910. Wartime job opportunities drew still more blacks in 1917–1918 (as discussed in Chapter 22), and by 1920, 1.4 million African-Americans lived in the North, mostly in cities. Here, too, racism worsened after 1890 as hard times and immigration heightened social tensions. Segregation, though not imposed by law, was enforced by custom and sometimes by violence. Their ballots—usually cast for the party of Lincoln—brought little political influence. Blacks lived in run-down "colored districts," attended dilapidated schools, and worked at the lowest-paying jobs. Even the movies preached racism. D. W. Griffith's 1915 film classic *The Birth of a Nation* disparaged blacks and glorified the Ku Klux Klan.

Smoldering racism sometimes exploded in violence. White rioters in Atlanta in 1906 murdered twenty-five blacks and burned many black homes. From 1900 to 1920, an average of about seventy-five lynchings occurred yearly. Blacks whose assertive behavior or economic aspirations angered whites were especially vulnerable to lynch mobs. Some lynchings involved incredible sadism, with large crowds on hand, victims' bodies mutilated, and graphic photo postcards sold later. Authorities rarely intervened. At a 1916 lynching in Texas, the mayor warned the mob not to damage the hanging tree on city property.

In the face of such hostility, African-Americans developed strong institutions. Black religious life, centered in the African Methodist Episcopal church, provided a bulwark of support for many. Working African-American mothers, drawing on strategies dating to slavery days, relied on relatives and neighbors for child care. A handful of black higher-education institutions carried on against heavy odds. The urban black community included black-owned insurance companies and banks, and a small elite of entrepreneurs, teachers, and ministers. Although major-league baseball excluded blacks, a thriving Negro League attracted many African-American fans.

In this racist age, progressives compiled a mixed record on racial issues. Muckraker Ray Stannard Baker documented racism in *Following the Color Line* (1908). Settlement-house worker Mary White Ovington helped found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909 and wrote *Half a Man* (1911) about racism's psychological toll.

But most progressives kept silent as blacks' rights were trampled. Viewing blacks as inferior, white progressives generally supported or tolerated segregation and the strict moral oversight of African-American communities, occasionally advocating,

CHECKING IN

- Progressives made significant progress in political reform at state and local levels, battling corruption and introducing electoral reform.
- At the state level, progressives achieved some success in the regulation of business and the reform of working conditions.
- Progressives also sought to improve urban conditions by beautifying cities and creating better public-health systems.
- At its worst, progressivism endeavored to impose middle-class morality on immigrants, as it did with the temperance movement.
- Many progressives supported immigration restrictions and tolerated racism.

at best, paternalistic efforts to “up-lift” this supposedly backward and child-like people. Viciously racist southern politicians like Governor James K. Vardaman of Mississippi and Senator Ben Tillman of South Carolina also supported progressive reforms.

At the national level, President Theodore Roosevelt’s record on race was marginally better than that of other politicians. He appointed a black to head the Charleston customs house despite white opposition. And in a symbolically important gesture, he dined with Booker T. Washington at the White House. In 1906, however, he approved the dishonorable discharge of an entire regiment of black soldiers, including Congressional Medal of Honor winners, in Brownsville, Texas, because some members of the unit, goaded by racist taunts, had killed a local civilian. The “Brownsville Incident” incensed black Americans. (In 1972, after most of the men were dead, Congress reversed the dishonorable discharges.)

Under President Woodrow Wilson, racism became rampant in Washington. A southerner, Wilson displayed at best a patronizing attitude toward blacks, praised the racist movie *The Birth of a Nation*, appointed southerners to his cabinet, and allowed racial segregation in all levels of the government.

BLACKS, WOMEN, AND WORKERS ORGANIZE

How did progressives try to control morality, and how did they view immigrants and blacks?

The organizational strategy so central to progressivism generally also proved useful for groups facing discrimination or exploitation. African-Americans, middle-class women, and wage workers all organized to address their grievances and improve their situation.

African-American Leaders Organize Against Racism

With racism on the rise, Booker T. Washington’s self-help message (see Chapter 20) seemed increasingly unrealistic, particularly to northern blacks. In 1902, one editor of a black newspaper called Washington’s go-slow policies “a fatal blow . . . to the Negro’s political rights and liberty.” Another opponent was the black journalist and activist **Ida Wells-Barnett**. Moving to Chicago from Memphis in 1892 after a white mob destroyed her offices, Wells-Barnett mounted a national anti-lynching campaign, in contrast to Booker T. Washington’s public silence on the subject.

Washington’s principal black critic was **W. E. B. Du Bois** (1868–1963). After earning a PhD in history from Harvard in 1895, Du Bois taught at Atlanta University. In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), Du Bois rejected Washington’s emphasis on patience and manual skills. Instead, Du Bois demanded full racial equality, including equal educational opportunities, and urged resistance to all forms of racism.

In 1905, under Du Bois’s leadership, blacks committed to battling racism held a conference at Niagara Falls. For the next few years, participants in the “Niagara Movement” met annually. In 1909, white reformers who had grown dissatisfied with

Ida Wells-Barnett Eloquent speaker, writer, and civil rights activist who championed anti-lynching legislation

W. E. B. Du Bois African-American scholar and civil rights leader; author of *The Souls of Black Folk*

Washington's cautiousness joined with Du Bois and other blacks from the Niagara Movement to form the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**. This new organization called for sustained activism, including legal challenges, to achieve political equality for blacks and full integration into American life. Attracting the urban black middle class, the NAACP by 1914 had six thousand members in fifty branches.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Major civil rights organization founded during the Progressive Era

Revival of the Woman-Suffrage Movement

As late as 1910, women could vote in only four western states: Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho. But women's active role in progressive reform movements revitalized the suffrage cause. A vigorous suffrage movement in Great Britain reverberated in America as well. Like progressivism itself, this revived campaign had grass-roots origins. A 1915 suffrage campaign in New York State, though unsuccessful, underscored the new momentum.

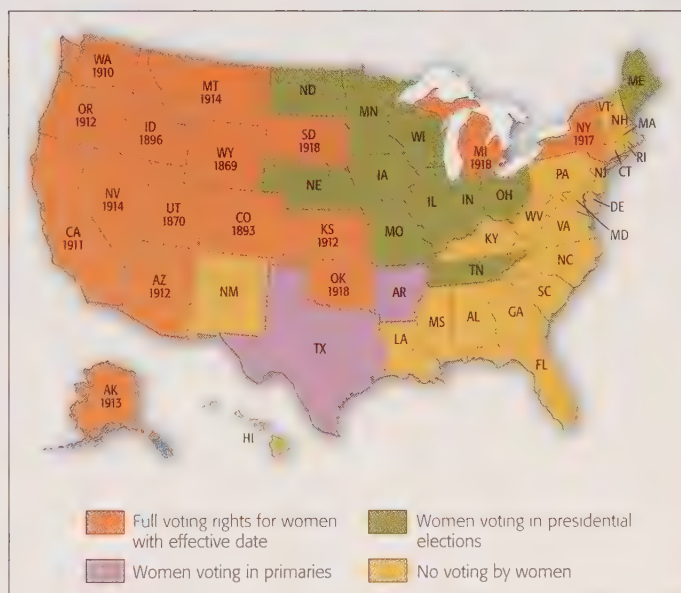
Developments in California illustrated both the movement's new momentum and its limitations. By the early 1900s, California's women's clubs had evolved into a potent statewide organization active in municipal reform and public-school issues. This activism convinced many members that full citizenship meant the right to vote. While working with labor leaders and male progressives, the woman-suffrage strategists also insisted on the unique role of "organized womanhood" in building a better society. Success came in 1911 when California voters approved woman suffrage.

However, "organized womanhood" in California had its limits. Elite and middle-class women, mainly based in Los Angeles and San Francisco, led the campaign. Working-class and farm women played a small role, while African-American, Mexican-American, and Asian-American women were almost totally excluded.

New leaders translated the momentum in New York, California, and other states into a revitalized national movement. When Susan B. Anthony retired from the presidency of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) in 1900, **Carrie Chapman Catt** of Iowa succeeded her. Under Catt, NAWSA adopted the so-called Winning Plan: grass-roots organization with tight central coordination, focused on state-level campaigns.

Adopting techniques from the new urban consumer culture, suffragists ran newspaper ads, put up posters, waved banners with catchy slogans, organized parades in open cars, arranged photo opportunities for the media, and distributed fans and other items emblazoned with the suffrage message. Gradually, state after state fell into the suffrage column (see Map 21.1).

Carrie Chapman Catt Leader of women's movement; led the drive for woman suffrage in the early twentieth century



Map 21.1 Woman Suffrage Before the Nineteenth Amendment

Beginning with Wyoming in 1869, woman suffrage made steady gains in western states before 1920. Farther east, key victories came in New York (1917) and Michigan (1918). But much of the East remained an anti-woman suffrage bastion throughout the period.

[Interactive Map](#)



Parading for Woman Suffrage

Suffrage leaders built support for the cause by using modern advertising and publicity techniques, including automobiles festooned with flags, banners, and—in this case—smiling little girls.

Library of Congress

As in California (and like progressive organizations generally), NAWSA's membership remained largely white, native born, and middle class. Some upper-class women opposed the reform. Women already enjoyed behind-the-scenes influence, they argued; invading the male realm of electoral politics would tarnish their moral and spiritual role.

Not all suffragists accepted Catt's strategy. Alice Paul, influenced by the British suffragists' militant tactics, grew impatient with NAWSA's state-by-state approach. In 1913, Paul founded the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage, renamed the National Woman's Party in 1917, to pressure Congress for a woman-suffrage amendment. In 1917–1918, with the United States at war, the suffrage cause prevailed in New York and Michigan and advanced toward final success (further discussed in Chapter 22).

Enlarging "Woman's Sphere"

The suffrage movement did not exhaust American women's talents or organizational energies. Women's club members, settlement-house leaders, and individual female activists joined in various campaigns: to bring playgrounds and day nurseries to the slums, to abolish child labor, to improve conditions for women workers, and to ban unsafe foods and quack remedies. As Jane Addams observed, women's concern for their own families' welfare could also draw them into political activism in an industrial age when hazards came from outside the home as well as inside.

Cultural assumptions about "woman's sphere" weakened as women invaded many fronts. Katherine Bement Davis served as New York City's commissioner of corrections. Emma Goldman crisscrossed the country delivering riveting lectures on politics, feminism, and modern drama while coediting a radical monthly, *Mother Earth*. A vanguard of pioneering women in higher education included Marion Talbot, first dean of women at the University of Chicago.

In *Women and Economics* (1898) and other works, feminist intellectual Charlotte Perkins Gilman explored the historical and cultural roots of female subordination, and linked women's inferior status to their economic dependence on men. Confining women to the domestic sphere, Gilman argued, was an evolutionary throwback that had become outdated and inefficient. She advocated economic independence for women through equality in the workplace, the collectivization of domestic chores, and state-run day-care centers.

Some Progressive Era reformers challenged federal and state laws banning the distribution of contraceptives and birth-control information. Although countless women, particularly the poor, suffered health problems from frequent pregnancies, artificial contraception was widely denounced as immoral. In 1914, **Margaret Sanger** of New York, whose mother had died after bearing eleven children, began her crusade for birth control, a term she coined. When the authorities proscribed her journal *The Woman Rebel* on obscenity charges, Sanger fled to Great Britain. Returning in 1916, she opened the nation's first birth-control clinic in Brooklyn and founded the American Birth Control League, forerunner of today's Planned Parenthood Federation.

Meanwhile, another New Yorker, Mary Ware Dennett, also emerged as an advocate of birth control and sex education. While Sanger championed direct action to promote the cause, Dennett urged lobbying efforts to change the law. Sanger insisted that only physicians should supply contraceptives; Dennett argued for widespread distribution. These differences, plus personal rivalries, produced divisions in the movement.

The birth-control and sex-education movements stand as important legacies of progressivism. At the time, however, conservatives bitterly opposed them. Dennett's frank 1919 informational pamphlet for youth, *The Sex Side of Life*, was long banned as obscene. Not until 1965 did the Supreme Court fully legalize the dissemination of contraceptive materials and information.

Margaret Sanger Founder of the birth-control movement; leading feminist

Workers Organize; Socialism Advances

In this age of organization, labor unions continued to expand. In 1900–1920, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) grew from 625,000 to 4 million members. This still represented only about 20 percent of the industrial work force. With immigrants hungry for jobs, union activities posed risks. The boss could always fire an “agitator” and hire a newcomer. Judicial hostility also retarded unionization. In the 1908 *Danbury Hatters* case, the Supreme Court ruled that boycotts in support of strikes violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. The AFL's strength remained in the skilled trades, not in the factories and mills where most immigrants and women worked.

A few unions did try to reach these laborers. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), founded in 1900 by immigrant workers in New York City's needle trades, conducted successful strikes in 1909 and after the 1911 Triangle fire. Some picketers lost their jobs or endured police beatings, but the strikers did win higher wages and improved working conditions.

Another union that targeted the most exploited workers was the **Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)**, or Wobblies, founded in Chicago in 1905. Led by the colorful William D. “Big Bill” Haywood, the IWW's membership peaked at around thirty thousand, mostly western miners, lumbermen, fruit pickers, and itinerant laborers. The IWW led some mass strikes of miners and timber workers, but its greatest success came in 1912 when it won a rancorous textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The victory owed much to Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a fervent Irish-American orator who publicized the cause by

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) Occasionally radical union discredited by use of violence

CHECKING IN

- In pursuit of political rights, some African-Americans, led by W. E. B. Du Bois, rejected Booker T. Washington's gradualism and became activists.
- The woman-suffrage movement emerged as a major component of progressivism.
- Women like Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger pushed beyond the boundaries of the traditional "woman's sphere," promoting economic independence and birth control.
- The AFL grew larger and stronger but remained focused on the skilled trades; the more radical IWW blossomed, bloomed, and faded.
- Socialists gained strength, even among the middle class.

Eugene V. Debs Socialist labor leader whose surprising showing in the 1912 presidential election illustrated the growing frustrations of many workers

Theodore Roosevelt Youthful successor to William McKinley in 1901; pushed an agenda of progressive reform

William Howard Taft Roosevelt's hand-picked successor for president; later served as Supreme Court justice

sending strikers' children to sympathizers in New York City for temporary care. With an exaggerated reputation for violence, the IWW faced government harassment, especially during World War I, and by 1920 its strength was broken.

Other workers, along with some middle-class Americans, turned to socialism. Socialists advocated an end to capitalism and demanded public ownership of factories, utilities, railroads, and communications systems. But American workers generally rejected the revolutionary ideology of German social theorist Karl Marx in favor of democratic socialism achieved at the ballot box. In 1900 democratic socialists formed the Socialist Party of America (SPA). **Eugene V. Debs**, the Indiana labor leader, became the SPA's most popular spokesman and its candidate for president five times between 1900 and 1920.

The pinnacle of socialist strength came in 1912 when the SPA counted 118,000 members, Debs received over 900,000 (about 6 percent) of the votes for president, and the Socialists elected a congressman and many municipal officials. The party published over three hundred newspapers, including foreign-language papers targeting immigrants.

NATIONAL PROGRESSIVISM PHASE I: ROOSEVELT AND TAFT, 1901–1913

What strategies did African-Americans, women, and industrial workers use to improve their lot?

By 1905 localized reform movements had coalesced into a national effort. In 1906, Robert La Follette was elected a U.S. senator. Five years earlier, progressivism had found its first national leader, **Theodore Roosevelt**, nicknamed "TR."

Self-righteous, jingoistic, verbose—but also brilliant, politically savvy, and endlessly interesting—Roosevelt became president in 1901 and made the White House a cauldron of political activism. Skillfully orchestrating public opinion, Roosevelt pursued his goals—labor mediation, consumer protection, corporate regulation, natural-resource conservation, and engagement abroad.

Roosevelt's activist approach permanently enlarged the powers of the presidency. His handpicked successor, **William Howard Taft**, proved politically inept, however, and controversy marked his administration. With the Republicans divided, the Democrat Woodrow Wilson, espousing a somewhat different reform vision, won the presidency in 1912.

Roosevelt's Path to the White House

On September 6, 1901, in Buffalo, an anarchist shot President William McKinley. On September 14 McKinley died, and forty-two-year-old Vice President Theodore Roosevelt became president. Many Republican leaders shuddered at the thought of what one called "that damned cowboy" in the White House. Roosevelt was the son of an aristocratic New York family and was sickly as a child, but he had used a body-building

program and active summers in Wyoming to become a model of physical fitness. When his young wife died in 1884, he stoically carried on. Two years on a Dakota ranch deepened his enthusiasm for what he termed “the strenuous life.”

Although his social peers scorned politics, Roosevelt served as a state assemblyman, New York City police commissioner, and U.S. civil-service commissioner. In 1898, fresh from his Cuban exploits, he was elected New York’s governor. Two years later, the state’s Republican boss, eager to be rid of him, arranged for Roosevelt’s nomination as vice president.

Roosevelt enjoyed public life and loved the limelight. “When Theodore attends a wedding he wants to be the bride,” his daughter observed, “and when he attends a funeral he wants to be the corpse.” With his toothy grin, machine-gun speech, and amazing energy, he dominated the political landscape. When he refused to shoot a bear cub on a hunting trip, a shrewd toy maker marketed a cuddly new product, the Teddy Bear.

Labor Disputes, Trustbusting, and Railroad Regulation

The new president’s political skills were quickly tested. In May 1902, the United Mine Workers Union (UMW) called a strike to gain higher wages, shorter hours, and recognition as a union. The mine owners refused to talk to UMW leaders. After five months, with coal reserves dwindling and winter looming, Roosevelt summoned the deadlocked parties to the White House. Threatening to take over the mines, he won reluctant acceptance of an arbitration commission to settle the dispute. In 1903, the commission granted miners a 10 percent wage hike and reduced their workday from ten to nine hours.

Roosevelt approached such labor disputes very differently from his predecessors, who had called out federal troops to break strikes. Although not consistently pro-labor, he defended labor’s right to organize and derided as “arrogant stupidity” business owners’ resistance to arbitration.

With his elite background, Roosevelt neither feared nor much liked business tycoons. Conservative at heart, he had no desire to abolish big corporations, but he embraced the progressive philosophy that corporate behavior must be carefully regulated. A strict moralist, he believed that corporations, like individuals, must meet a high standard of virtue.

Another test came in 1901 when J. P. Morgan formed the United States Steel Company, the nation’s first billion-dollar business. As public distrust of big corporations deepened, Roosevelt dashed to the head of the parade. His 1902 State of the Union message gave high priority to breaking up business monopolies, or “trustbusting.” Roosevelt’s attorney general soon filed suit against the Northern Securities Company, a mammoth holding company formed to control railroading in the Northwest, for violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Roosevelt called for a “square deal” for all Americans and denounced special treatment for capitalists. “We don’t wish to destroy corporations,” he insisted, “but we do wish to make them serve the public good.” In 1904, a divided Supreme Court ordered the Northern Securities Company dissolved.

The Roosevelt administration filed over forty antitrust lawsuits. In two key rulings in 1911, the Court ordered the breakup of the Standard Oil Company and the reorganization of the American Tobacco Company to make it less monopolistic.

As the 1904 presidential election approached, Roosevelt made peace with Morgan and other business magnates. When the convention that unanimously nominated Roosevelt adopted a probusiness platform, \$2 million in corporate campaign contributions poured in. The Democrats, meanwhile, eager to erase the taint of radicalism lingering from the 1890s, embraced the gold standard and nominated a conservative New York judge.

Winning easily, Roosevelt turned to a major goal: railroad regulation. He now saw corporate regulation as more effective than trustbusting, and this shift underlay the 1906 **Hepburn Act**. This law empowered the Interstate Commerce Commission to set maximum railroad rates and to examine railroads' financial records. It also curtailed the railroads' practice of distributing free passes to ministers and other shapers of public opinion. Although failing to fully satisfy reformers, the Hepburn Act did expand the government's regulatory powers.

Hepburn Act Legislation that strengthened government power to regulate railroads

Consumer Protection

Of all progressive reforms, the campaign against unsafe food, drugs, and medicine proved especially popular. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906) graphically described conditions in some meatpacking plants. Wrote Sinclair in one vivid passage, "[A] man could run his hand over these piles of meat and sweep off handfuls of dried dung of rats. These rats were nuisances, and the packers would put poisoned bread out for them, they would die, and then rats, bread, and meat would go into the hoppers together." Women's organizations and consumer groups rallied public opinion on this issue. Other muckrakers exposed useless or dangerous patent medicines laced with cocaine, opium, or alcohol. One tonic "for treatment of the alcohol habit" contained 26.5 percent alcohol. Peddlers of these nostrums freely claimed that they could cure cancer, grow hair, and restore sexual vigor.

Sensing the public mood, Roosevelt supported the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act, both passed in 1906. The former outlawed the sale of adulterated food and drugs, and required accurate ingredient labels; the latter imposed strict sanitary rules on meatpackers, set up a quality-rating system, and created a program of federal meat inspection.

Environmentalism Progressive-Style

In his first State of the Union message, Roosevelt singled out conservation as "the most vital internal question." By 1900 decades of urban-industrial growth and western expansion had taken a heavy toll on the land. In the West, land use disputes raged as mining and timber interests, farmers, ranchers, sheep growers, and preservationists advanced competing claims.

Western business interests and boosters preached exploitation of the region's resources, and farmers pushed for irrigation projects, but organizations like the Sierra Club battled to preserve large wild areas for their pristine beauty. Under a law passed in 1891, Presidents Harrison and Cleveland set aside some 35 million acres of public lands as national forests.

A wilderness vogue swept the United States in the early twentieth century. From congested cities and clanging factories, Americans looked to the wilderness

for tranquility and spiritual solace. Popular writers evoked the lure of the primitive, and the Boy Scouts (1910) and Girl Scouts (1912) gave city children a taste of the outdoors.

Between the wilderness enthusiasts and the developers stood government professionals like Gifford Pinchot who saw the public domain as a resource to be managed wisely. Appointed by Roosevelt in 1905 to head the new U.S. Forest Service, Pinchot stressed not preservation but conservation—the planned use of forest lands for public and commercial purposes.

At heart Roosevelt was a preservationist. He once compared “the destruction of a species” to the loss of “all the works of some great writer.” However, Roosevelt the politician backed the conservationists’ call for planned development. He supported the **National Reclamation Act** of 1902, which earmarked the proceeds of public-land sales for water management in the arid western regions and established the Reclamation Service to plan dams and irrigation projects.

This measure ranks with the Northwest Ordinance for promoting the development and productivity of a vast region of North America. Arizona’s Roosevelt Dam

National Reclamation Act

Sold public land and used the revenues for water management and dam projects



Yosemite National Park

President Theodore Roosevelt and Friends Commune with Nature, 1903

Dwarfed by an ancient sequoia, the Grizzly Giant, in the Mariposa Grove of California’s Yosemite National Park, Roosevelt’s party included California governor George Pardee (third from left), the naturalist and Sierra Club founder John Muir (fourth from right), and the presidents of Columbia University (third from right) and the University of California (far right). The Grizzly Giant still stands, and remains a favorite with tourists.

spurred the growth of Phoenix, and the Snake River project converted thousands of barren Idaho acres into fertile farmland. The law required those who benefited from reclamation projects to repay the government for construction costs, creating a federal fund for further projects. It made possible the transition of the West from a series of isolated “island settlements” into a thriving, interconnected region.

The competition for scarce water resources in the West sparked bitter political battles. The Los Angeles basin, for example, with 40 percent of California’s population in 1900, found itself with only 2 percent of the state’s surface water. In 1907, the City of Los Angeles derailed a Reclamation Service project intended for the farmers of California’s Owens Valley, more than 230 miles to the north, and diverted the precious water to Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, President Roosevelt backed Pinchot’s program of multiuse land management and set aside more than 200 million acres of public land as national forests, mineral reserves, and potential waterpower sites. But the national-forest provisions provoked corporate opposition, and in 1907 Congress revoked the president’s authority to create national forests in six timber-rich western states. Before signing the bill, Roosevelt designated 16 million more acres in the six states as national forests. Roosevelt also created fifty-three wildlife reserves, sixteen national monuments, and five new national parks. Congress established the National Park Service in 1916 to manage them.

Gifford Pinchot organized a White House conservation conference for the nation’s governors in 1908, but John Muir and other wilderness preservationists were not invited. However, preservationists won key victories in this era. For example, initiatives by private citizens saved a large grove of California’s giant redwoods and a lovely stretch of the Maine coastline.

However, the Sierra Club lost a major battle to save the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park when Congress in 1913 approved a dam on the Tuolumne River to provide water and hydroelectric power for San Francisco. The controversy focused attention on environmental issues, as Americans for the first time weighed the aesthetic implications of a major public-works project.

Taft in the White House, 1909–1913

Roosevelt had pledged not to run for a third term in 1908, and to the disappointment of millions, he kept his promise. The Republicans’ most conservative leaders regained control. Although they nominated Roosevelt’s choice, William Howard Taft, for president, they selected a conservative vice-presidential candidate and drafted a deeply conservative platform. The Democrats, meanwhile, nominated William Jennings Bryan for a third and final time. The Democratic platform called for a lower tariff, denounced the trusts, and embraced the cause of labor.

With Roosevelt’s endorsement, Taft coasted to victory. However, the Democrats made gains, and progressive Republican state candidates outran the national ticket. Overall, the outcome suggested a lull in the reform movement, not its end. Taft differed markedly from Roosevelt. Whereas Roosevelt kept himself in fighting trim, Taft was obese. Roosevelt installed a boxing ring in the White House; Taft preferred golf. Roosevelt loved speechmaking and battling evildoers; Taft disliked controversy. His happiest days would come later, as chief justice of the United States.

Pledged to carry on Roosevelt's program, Taft supported the Mann-Elkins Act (1910), which strengthened the Interstate Commerce Commission's rate-setting powers and extended its authority to telephone and telegraph companies. Taft's administration actually prosecuted more antitrust cases than had Roosevelt's, but did so with little publicity. To the public, Roosevelt remained the mighty trustbuster.

The reform spotlight, meanwhile, shifted to Congress, where a group of reform-minded Republicans, nicknamed the Insurgents, including Senators La Follette and Albert Beveridge of Indiana and Congressman George Norris of Nebraska, challenged their party's conservative congressional leadership. In 1909, the Insurgents and Taft fought a bruising battle over the tariff. Taft first backed the Insurgents' call for a lower tariff. But when high-tariff advocates in Congress pushed through a measure raising duties on hundreds of items, Taft not only signed it but praised it extravagantly, infuriating the Insurgents.

The so-called Ballinger-Pinchot affair widened the rift. Richard A. Ballinger, Taft's secretary of the interior, was a Seattle lawyer who favored the unregulated private development of natural resources. Ballinger approved the sale of several million acres of coal-rich public lands in Alaska in 1909 to some Seattle businessmen, who promptly resold it to J. P. Morgan and other financiers. When a Department of Interior official protested, he was fired. In true muckraking style, he went public, blasting Ballinger in a *Collier's* magazine article. When Gifford Pinchot of the Forest Service also criticized Ballinger, he too got the ax. Roosevelt's supporters seethed.

When Roosevelt returned to the United States from an African safari in June 1910, Pinchot met the boat. Openly breaking with Taft, Roosevelt campaigned for Insurgent candidates in that year's midterm elections. In a speech that alarmed conservatives, he endorsed the radical idea of reversing judicial rulings by popular vote. Borrowing a term from Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life*, Roosevelt proposed a "New Nationalism" that would powerfully engage the federal government in reform.

Democrats captured the House in 1910, and a coalition of Democrats and Insurgents controlled the Senate. As fervor for reform rose, Roosevelt sounded more and more like a presidential candidate.

The Four-Way Election of 1912

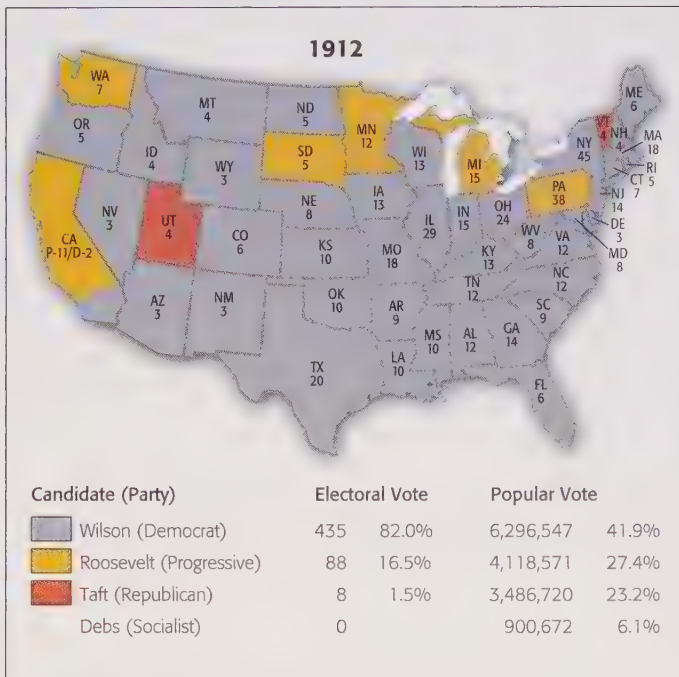
In February 1912, Roosevelt announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination. However, Taft wanted a second term. Although Roosevelt generally walloped Taft in the Republican state primaries and conventions, Taft controlled the party machinery, and the Republican convention in Chicago disqualified many of Roosevelt's hard-won delegates. Outraged, Roosevelt's backers walked out and formed the **Progressive Party**. What had been a general term for a broad reform movement now became the official name of a political party.

"I feel fit as a bull moose," Roosevelt trumpeted, thereby giving his organization its nickname, the Bull Moose Party. The party's convention platform endorsed most reform causes of the day, including lower

Progressive Party National third party formed around Roosevelt's presidential candidacy in 1912

CHECKING IN

- Theodore Roosevelt's unprecedented presidential activism captivated the American people.
- Roosevelt became known as "the great trustbuster" for his vigorous enforcement of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and stricter regulation of railroads.
- Protection of the public through such measures as the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act were cornerstones of Roosevelt's presidential progressivism.
- Roosevelt's administration set aside millions of acres for preservation but also promoted planned development of the West through the National Reclamation Act.
- Angered by what he saw as betrayal by his chosen successor, Taft, Roosevelt and his supporters formed the Bull Moose (Progressive) Party in 1912; with Republicans divided, the Democratic candidate, Woodrow Wilson, won the election.



Map 21.2 The Election of 1912

In the campaign, Taft more or less gave up, satisfied to have kept his party safe for conservatism. The Socialist candidate Eugene Debs proposed an end to capitalism. Roosevelt preached his New Nationalism: Corporations must be regulated in the public interest, the welfare of workers and consumers safeguarded, and the environment protected.

Interactive Map

Woodrow Wilson Democratic president whose election in 1912 ushered in a second wave of progressive reforms on the national level

NATIONAL PROGRESSIVISM PHASE II: WOODROW WILSON, 1913–1917

As progressivism became a national movement, what issues proved most important?

The son and grandson of Presbyterian ministers, Wilson grew up in southern towns in a churchly atmosphere that shaped his oratory and moral outlook. Despite a learning disability (probably dyslexia), he graduated from Princeton and earned a PhD in political science from Johns Hopkins University. Joining Princeton's faculty, he became its president in 1902. A rigid unwillingness to compromise cost him faculty support, however, and in 1910 Wilson resigned to enter politics. Three years later, he was president of the United States.

Wilson was an eloquent orator who excelled at political deal making. But he could also retreat into a fortress of absolute certitude that tolerated no opposition. During his years as president, all these facets of his personality would come into play.

tariffs, woman suffrage, business regulation, the abolition of child labor, the eight-hour workday, workers' compensation, the direct primary, and the popular election of senators. The new party attracted a diverse following, united mainly by affection for Roosevelt.

Meanwhile, the reform spirit also infused the Democratic Party. In New Jersey in 1910, voters elected a political novice, **Woodrow Wilson**, as governor. A "Wilson for President" boom soon arose, and when the Democrats assembled in Baltimore in June 1912, Wilson won the nomination, defeating several established party leaders.

Wilson called for a "New Freedom," evoking an earlier era of small government, small businesses, and free competition. The divided Republicans proved no match for the united Democrats. Wilson prevailed, and the Democrats took both houses of Congress (see Map 21.2). More than nine hundred thousand voters opted for Debs and socialism.

The 1912 election identified the triumphant Democrats with reform (except on the issue of race)—a link that Franklin D. Roosevelt would strengthen in the 1930s. In addition, Theodore Roosevelt's third-party campaign demonstrated the continued appeal of reform among many grass-roots Republicans.

Wilson proved ready to use government to address the problems of the new corporate order, and the national progressive movement gained powerful new momentum.

Tariff and Banking Reform

Lowering tariff rates—long a goal of southern and agrarian Democrats—headed Wilson’s agenda. A low-tariff bill passed the House but bogged down in the Senate. Showing his flair for drama, Wilson denounced tariff lobbyists, and his censure led to a Senate investigation of lobbyists and of senators who profited from high tariffs. Stung by the publicity, the Senate slashed tariff rates even more than the House had done. The Underwood-Simmons Tariff reduced rates an average of 15 percent.

In June 1913, Wilson called for banking and currency reform. The nation’s totally decentralized banking system clearly needed overhauling. But no consensus existed on specifics. Many reformers wanted a publicly controlled central banking system, but the nation’s bankers favored private control. Some opposed any central banking authority, public or private.

Wilson, who was no banking expert, insisted that the monetary system ultimately be publicly controlled. As the bargaining went on, Wilson played a crucial behind-the-scenes role. The result was the **Federal Reserve Act** (1913). A compromise measure, this law created twelve regional Federal Reserve banks under mixed public and private control. Each regional bank could issue U.S. dollars, called Federal Reserve notes, to the banks in its district to make loans. Overall control of the system was assigned to the heads of the twelve regional banks and the members of a Washington-based Federal Reserve Board (FRB), appointed by the president for fourteen-year terms.

The Federal Reserve Act stands as Wilson’s greatest legislative achievement. In time the FRB, nicknamed “the Fed,” grew into the strong central monetary institution it remains today, setting interest rates and adopting fiscal policies to prevent financial panics, promote economic growth, and combat inflation.

Federal Reserve Act Major step toward establishing a solid national banking system

Regulating Business; Aiding Workers and Farmers

In 1914, Wilson and his congressional allies turned to that perennial progressive cause, business regulation. The two laws that resulted sought a common goal, but embodied different approaches. The **Federal Trade Commission Act** (1914) reflected an administrative approach by creating a “watchdog” agency, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), with power to investigate suspected violations, require regular reports from corporations, and issue cease-and-desist orders against unfair methods of competition. The Clayton Antitrust Act (1914) took a legal approach. It remedied the Sherman Anti-Trust Act’s vagueness by spelling out a series of illegal practices, such as selling at a loss to undercut competitors. With the added clout of the Clayton Act, the Wilson administration filed antitrust suits against nearly a hundred corporations.

As he led a party long identified with workers, Wilson supported labor unions and workers’ right to organize. He also endorsed a Clayton Act clause exempting strikes, boycotts, and picketing from the antitrust laws’ prohibition of actions in restraint of trade. In 1916 (a campaign year), Wilson and congressional Democrats

Federal Trade Commission Agency to ensure fair trade and practices

enacted three important worker-protection laws. The Keating-Owen Act barred from interstate commerce products manufactured by child labor (later declared unconstitutional). The Adamson Act established an eight-hour workday for interstate railway workers. The Workmen's Compensation Act provided accident and injury protection to federal workers.

Other 1916 laws helped farmers. The Federal Farm Loan Act and the Federal Warehouse Act enabled farmers, using land or crops as collateral, to get low-interest federal loans. The Federal Highway Act, providing funds for highway programs, benefited not only the new automobile industry but also farmers plagued by bad roads.

Progressivism and the Constitution

The probusiness bias of the courts moderated in the Progressive Era. In *Muller v. Oregon* (1908), the Supreme Court upheld an Oregon law limiting female laundry and factory workers to a ten-hour workday. To defend the constitutionality of the Oregon law, Boston attorney **Louis Brandeis** offered economic, medical, and sociological evidence of how long hours harmed women workers. The Court's acceptance of the "Brandeis brief" marked a breakthrough in the legal system's responsiveness to new social realities.

In 1916, Wilson nominated Brandeis to the Supreme Court. Many conservatives, including Republican leaders in Congress, disapproved of Brandeis's innovative approach to the law and protested. Anti-Semites opposed him because he was a Jew. But Wilson stood firm, and Brandeis won Senate confirmation.

These years also produced four constitutional amendments. The Sixteenth Amendment (ratified in 1913) granted Congress the authority to tax income. An earlier income tax measure had been declared unconstitutional, spurring advocates to campaign for an amendment. Quickly exercising its new authority, Congress in 1913 imposed a graduated federal income tax with a maximum rate of 7 percent on incomes in excess of \$500,000. Income tax revenues helped pay for the government's regulatory activities under Progressive Era legislation. The Seventeenth Amendment (1913) completed a Populist crusade by mandating the direct popular election of U.S. senators. The Eighteenth Amendment (1919) established prohibition of "intoxicating liquors." The Nineteenth Amendment (1920) granted women the right to vote. This remarkable wave of amendments underscored the progressive movement's profound impact on the political landscape.

CHECKING IN

- Wilson achieved the long-sought Democratic goal of tariff reduction.
- The Federal Reserve Act, which gave the nation a central banking system, was Wilson's most important legislative achievement.
- The Clayton Anti-Trust Act strengthened government's regulatory powers.
- Wilson helped shepherd four constitutional amendments to ratification: direct popular election of senators, the income tax, prohibition, and woman suffrage.
- The outbreak of World War I curtailed and eventually ended the first great surge of progressivism.

1916: Wilson Edges Out Hughes

In 1916, Wilson easily won his party's nomination. The Republicans nominated Charles Evans Hughes, Supreme Court justice and former New York governor. Urged by Roosevelt, who was obsessed with drawing the United States into the war that had broken out in Europe in 1914 (see Chapter 22), the Progressive Party endorsed Hughes. With the Republicans more or less reunited, the election was extremely close. War-related issues loomed large. Wilson won the popular vote, but the Electoral College outcome remained in doubt for weeks as the California tally seesawed back and

Louis Brandeis Jurist who pioneered the use of sociology and other social sciences in arguing legal cases

forth. Ultimately, Wilson carried the state by less than four thousand votes and, with it, the election.

The progressive movement lost momentum as attention turned from reform to war. Final success for the prohibition and woman-suffrage campaigns came in 1919–1920, and Congress enacted a few reform measures in the 1920s. But, overall, the movement faded as America marched to war in 1917.

Chapter Summary

How did intellectuals, novelists, and journalists inspire the progressive movement? (page 497)

The progressive movement began as preachers, novelists, journalists, photographers, and painters highlighted appalling conditions in America's cities and factories. Intellectuals offered ideas for reform through the creative use of government. Primarily middle class, progressives sought to improve urban life and working conditions, eliminate political corruption, and curb the excesses of the new urban, industrial society.

How did state and local progressives seek to reform cities and the new industrial order? (page 501)

At the local and state level, reformers like Mayor Hazen Pingree of Detroit and Wisconsin governor Robert M. La Follette, together with a host of reform organizations, worked to combat political corruption, make cities safer and more beautiful, regulate corporations, and improve conditions for workers.

How did progressives try to control morality, and how did they view immigrants and blacks? (page 510)

Progressivism had its coercive side. Some reformers concentrated on regulating urban amusements and banning alcohol consumption. Racism and hostility to immigrants comprised a part of the progressive legacy as well. Because of the refusal of progressive reformers to substantively address the problem of racial injustice, African-Americans became more politically active, founding the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

What strategies did African-Americans, women, and industrial workers use to improve their lot? (page 514)

The women's movement focused on the achievement of suffrage. A handful of women, like birth-control advocate Margaret Sanger, pushed far beyond the accepted "woman's sphere." The labor movement grew stronger, especially the AFL; more radical movements like the IWW flared. Meanwhile, Roosevelt's

KEY TERMS

"muckrakers" (p. 501)
 Robert La Follette (p. 503)
 Anti-Saloon League (ASL) (p. 507)
 Ida Wells-Barnett (p. 510)
 W. E. B. Du Bois (p. 510)
 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) (p. 511)
 Carrie Chapman Catt (p. 511)
 Margaret Sanger (p. 513)
 Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) (p. 513)
 Eugene V. Debs (p. 514)
 Theodore Roosevelt (p. 514)
 William Howard Taft (p. 514)
 Hepburn Act (p. 516)
 National Reclamation Act (p. 517)
 Progressive Party (p. 519)
 Woodrow Wilson (p. 520)
 Federal Reserve Act (p. 521)
 Federal Trade Commission (p. 521)
 Louis Brandeis (p. 522)

activist presidency captivated the American public. Under Roosevelt, Congress strengthened railroad regulation, established the Food and Drug Administration, and enormously increased the amount of land set aside for conservation and preservation. Roosevelt became known as “the great trustbuster.” However, President Taft alienated Roosevelt and progressive Republicans, who formed the Bull Moose (Progressive) Party. With Republicans divided, Democrat Woodrow Wilson won the presidency in 1912.

As progressivism became a national movement, what issues proved most important? (page 520)

Wilson’s presidency saw enormous strides in increasing government’s regulatory powers. For example, the Clayton Act strengthened antitrust law, and the Federal Reserve Act centralized banking. Four amendments to the Constitution embodied many progressive goals: direct popular election of senators, the income tax, prohibition, and woman suffrage. However, progressivism began to wane as attention turned to World War I. The next great reform movement, the New Deal of the 1930s, would draw on progressivism’s legacy.



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

CHAPTER 22

Global Involvements and World War I

1902–1920

Sow the seeds of Victory!

Plant &
raise
your own
vegetables



CHAPTER PREVIEW

Defining America's World Role, 1902–1914

What goals underlay America's early-twentieth-century involvements in Asia and Latin America?

War in Europe, 1914–1917

Considering both immediate and long-term factors, why did the United States go to war in 1917?

Mobilizing at Home, Fighting in France, 1917–1918

How did Washington mobilize the nation for war, and what role did U.S. troops play in the war?

Promoting the War and Suppressing Dissent

How did Americans respond to propaganda and suppression of dissent?

Economic and Social Trends in Wartime America

What was the war's economic, political, and social impact on the American home front?

Joyous Armistice, Bitter Aftermath, 1918–1920

How did the League of Nations begin, and why did the Senate reject U.S. membership in the League?

Library of Congress

World War I Poster Urging
Food Conservation, by the Illustrator
James Montgomery Flagg

It was April 6, 1917, and Jane Addams was troubled. Congress had just supported President Woodrow Wilson's call for a declaration of war on Germany. Addams had deep patriotic roots, but she believed in peace and deplored her nation's decision for war. As the founder of Hull House, a Chicago settlement house, Addams had worked to overcome tensions among different ethnic groups. When war broke out in Europe in 1914, Addams worked to end the conflict. A founder of the Woman's Peace Party in 1915, she attended an International Congress of Women that called on the warring nations to submit their differences to arbitration. Addams also met with President Wilson in a futile effort to enlist his support for arbitration.

Now America had entered the war, and Addams had to take a stand. Many of her friends, including John Dewey, were lining up behind Wilson. Despite the pressures, Addams heeded her conscience and opposed the war. The reaction was swift. Editorial writers who had earlier praised her settlement-house work now criticized her. For years after, the American Legion and other patriotic organizations attacked Addams for her “disloyalty” in 1917.

Addams did not sit out the war on the sidelines, however. She gave speeches across America urging increased food production to aid refugees. In 1919, she was elected first president of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. In 1931, she won the Nobel Peace Prize.

Addams’s experience underscores how deeply World War I affected American life. Beyond its immediate effects, the war had long-lasting social, economic, and political ramifications. In the late nineteenth century, America had become an industrial powerhouse seeking markets and raw materials, and these widening economic interests brought a new level of international engagement. This expanded world role, with important home-front ramifications, has continued to shape American history to the present. These broader involvements around the world, culminating in World War I, are the focus of this chapter.

DEFINING AMERICA’S WORLD ROLE, 1902–1914

What goals underlay America’s early-twentieth-century involvements in Asia and Latin America?

As noted in Chapter 20, the annexation of Hawai’i, the Spanish-American War, the occupation of the Philippines, and other developments in the 1890s signaled America’s growing involvement abroad. These foreign engagements reflected a desire to assert American power in an age of imperial expansion. This process of foreign engagement continued under Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson. America’s dealings with Asian and Latin American nations in these years were shaped by both economic and ideological considerations.

The “Open Door”: Competing for the China Market

As the campaign to suppress the Philippines insurrection dragged on (see Chapter 20), Americans shifted their focus to China. Their aim was not territorial but commercial. Proclaimed Indiana senator Albert J. Beveridge in 1898, “American factories are making more than the American people can use; American soil is producing more than they can consume. . . . [T]he trade of the world must and shall be ours.” Textile producers dreamed of clothing China’s millions; investors envisioned Chinese railroad construction. As China’s 250-year-old Manchu Ch’ing empire grew weaker, U.S. businesspeople watched carefully.

But other nations—including Russia, Germany, and Great Britain—were also eyeing the China market. Some pressured the weak Manchu rulers to give them exclusive trading and development rights in designated regions, or “spheres of influence.”

Chronology



1899	First U.S. Open Door note seeking access to China market; Boxer Rebellion erupts in China
1904	President Theodore Roosevelt proclaims "Roosevelt Corollary" to Monroe Doctrine
1905	Roosevelt mediates the end of the Russo-Japanese War
1906	San Francisco ends segregation of Asian schoolchildren; Panama Canal construction begins
1912	U.S. Marines occupy Nicaragua
1914	U.S. troops occupy Veracruz, Mexico; Panama Canal opens; World War I begins; President Wilson proclaims American neutrality
1915	U.S. Marines occupy Haiti and the Dominican Republic; Woman's Peace Party organized; British liner <i>Lusitania</i> sunk by German U-boat; Wilson permits U.S. bank loans to Allies
1916	U.S. punitive expedition invades Mexico, seeking Pancho Villa; Germany pledges not to attack merchant ships without warning; Wilson reelected
1917	U.S. troops withdraw from Mexico; Germany resumes unrestricted U-boat warfare; United States declares war; Selective Service Act sets up national draft; War Industries Board, Committee on Public Information, and Food Administration created; Espionage Act passed; NAACP march in New York City protests upsurge in lynchings; Bolsheviks seize power in Russia; U.S. government operates the nation's railroads
1918	Wilson outlines Fourteen Points; Sedition Amendment passed; global influenza pandemic takes heavy toll in United States; National War Labor Board created; American forces see action at Château-Thierry; Belleau Wood, St. Mihiel, and Meuse-Argonne campaign; armistice signed (November 11)
1919	Eighteenth Amendment added to the Constitution (prohibition); Peace treaty signed at Versailles; Supreme Court upholds silencing of war critics in <i>Schenck v. United States</i> ; upsurge of lynchings; racial violence in Chicago; Wilson suffers paralyzing stroke; Versailles treaty, with League covenant, rejected by Senate
1920	"Red raids" organized by Justice Department; Nineteenth Amendment added to the Constitution (woman suffrage); Warren G. Harding elected president

In 1899, U.S. Secretary of State John Hay asked the major European powers to assure American trading rights in China by opening the ports in their spheres of influence to all countries. The nations gave noncommittal answers, but Hay blithely announced their acceptance of the principle of an "Open Door" to American business in China.

Hay's Open Door note showed how commercial considerations were increasingly influencing American foreign policy. It reflected a quest for what has been called "informal empire," in contrast to the formal acquisition of overseas territories.

As Hay pursued this effort, a more urgent threat emerged. In 1899, an antiforeign secret society known as the Harmonious Righteous Fists (called "Boxers" by Western journalists) killed thousands of foreigners and Chinese Christians. In June 1900, the Boxers occupied Beijing (**BAY-jing**), China's capital, and besieged the district housing the foreign legations. The United States contributed twenty-five hundred soldiers to an international army that marched on Beijing, quashed the **Boxer Rebellion**, and rescued the occupants of the threatened legations.

The Boxers' defeat further weakened China's government. Fearing that the regime's collapse would allow European powers to carve up China, John Hay issued a second, more important, series of **Open Door notes** in 1900. He reaffirmed the principle of open trade in China for all nations and announced America's determination

Boxer Rebellion Fanatical Chinese insurgency against Christians and foreigners, defeated by an international force

Open Door notes John Hay's statement of American policy to keep trade open in China

to preserve China's territorial and administrative integrity. In general, China remained open to U.S. business interests and Christian missionaries. In the 1930s, when Japanese expansionism menaced China, Hay's policy helped shape the American response.

Along with U.S. economic expansion in China came missionary activity. American Protestant missionaries had come to Asia as early as the 1820s. By 1900, some five thousand U.S. missionaries were active in China, Africa, India, and elsewhere. As they preached their religious message, the missionaries also spread American influence globally and blazed the way for U.S. economic expansion.

The Panama Canal: Hardball Diplomacy

Dreams of a canal across the ribbon of land joining North and South America dated back to the Spanish conquest. Yellow fever and mismanagement brought a French company's late-nineteenth-century attempt to build a canal to disaster and left a half-completed waterway. To recoup some of the \$400 million loss, the company offered to sell its assets, including a concession from Colombia, which then controlled the isthmus, to the United States for \$109 million.

America was in an expansionist mood. In 1902, after the French lowered their price to \$40 million, Congress authorized President Theodore Roosevelt to accept the offer. The United States negotiated an agreement with the Colombian diplomat for a ninety-nine-year lease on the proposed canal. But when the Colombian Senate rejected the deal, seeking a better offer, Roosevelt privately denounced the Colombians as "greedy little anthropoids."

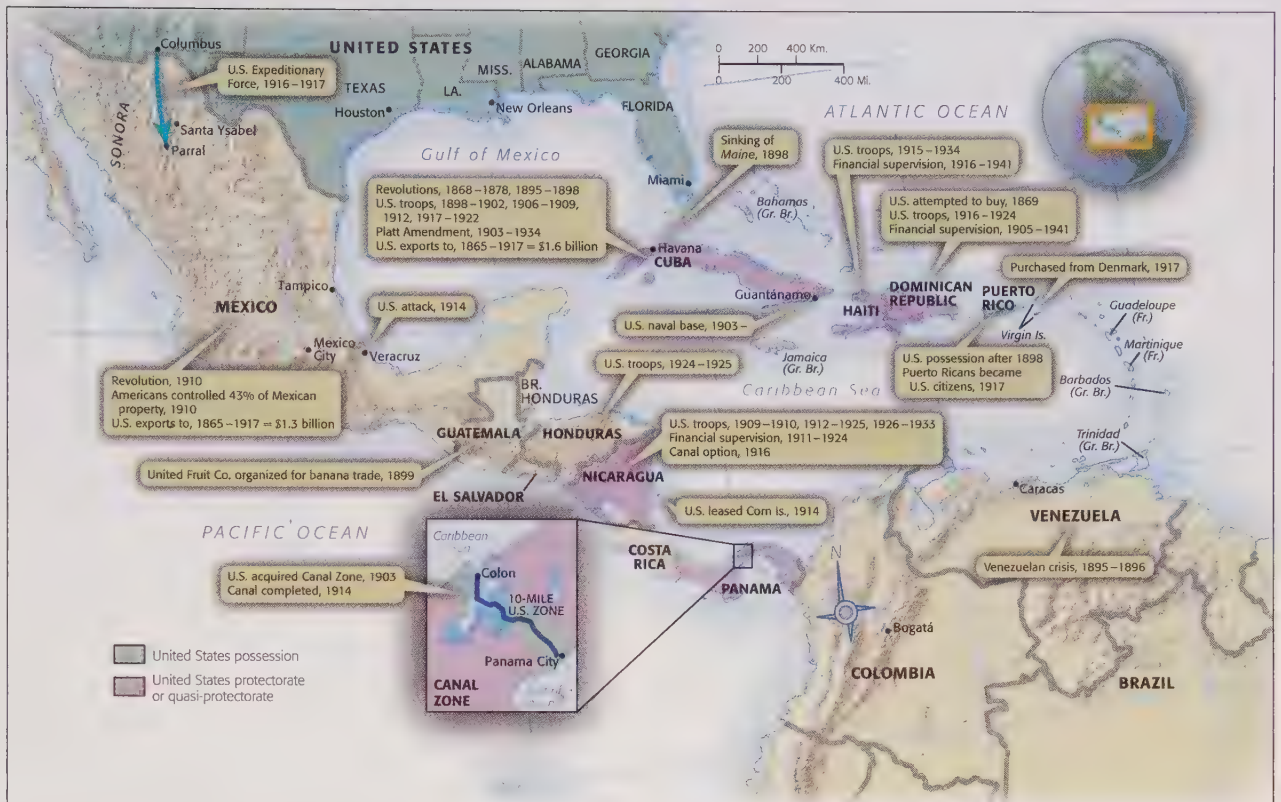
Roosevelt found a willing collaborator in Philippe Bunau-Varilla (**fih-LEEP boo-NAW vah-REE-yuh**), an official of the bankrupt French company. Dismayed that his company might lose its \$40 million, Bunau-Varilla organized a "revolution" in Panama from a New York hotel room. While his wife stitched a flag, he wrote a declaration of independence and a constitution for the new nation. On November 3, 1903, the "revolution" erupted on schedule, with a U.S. warship anchored offshore. In short order, Bunau-Varilla gained American recognition of the newly hatched nation and signed a treaty guaranteeing the United States a ten-mile-wide strip of land across Panama "in perpetuity" in return for \$10 million and an annual payment of \$250,000. Roosevelt later summarized the episode: "I took the Canal Zone, and let Congress debate, and while the debate goes on, the canal does also."

Before completing the canal, the United States first had to conquer yellow fever. After Dr. Walter Reed of the Army Medical Corps recognized the mosquito as its carrier, the army carried out a prodigious drainage project that eradicated the disease-bearing pest. Construction began in 1906, and in August 1914 the first ship sailed through the **Panama Canal**. The ill feeling generated by Theodore Roosevelt's actions, combined with other instances of U.S. interventionism, would long shadow U.S.-Latin American relations.

Panama Canal Waterway between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, completed by the United States in 1914

Roosevelt and Taft Assert U.S. Power in Latin America and Asia

While the Panama Canal remains this era's best-known foreign-policy achievement, other U.S. actions underscored Washington's growing determination to assert U.S. power and protect U.S. business interests in Latin America (see Map 22.1) and Asia. In 1904, when several European



Map 22.1 U.S. Hegemony in the Caribbean and Latin America, 1900–1941

Through many interventions, territorial acquisitions, and robust economic expansion, the United States became the pre-dominant power in Latin America in the early twentieth century. Acting on Theodore Roosevelt's assertion of a U.S. right to combat "wrongdoing" in Latin America and the Caribbean, the United States dispatched troops to the region, where they met nationalist opposition.

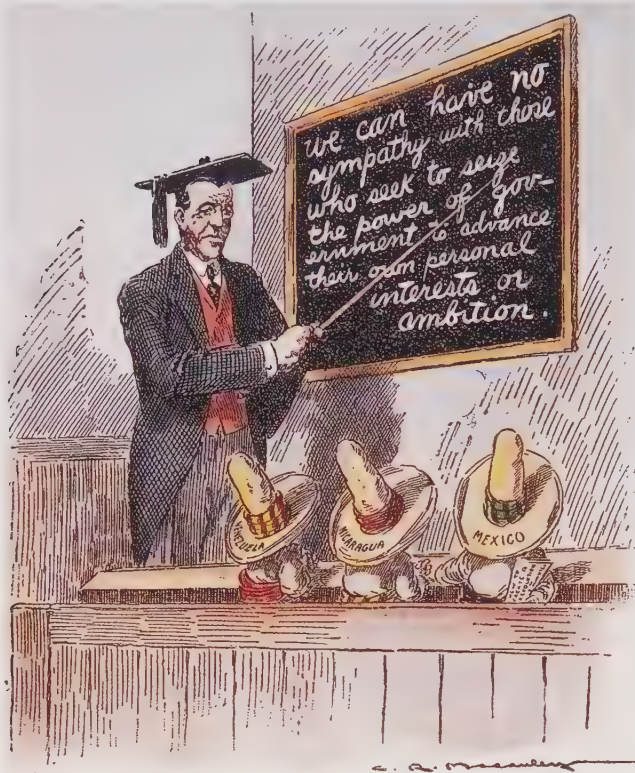


Interactive Map

nations threatened to invade the Dominican Republic, a small Caribbean island nation that had defaulted on its debts, Roosevelt reacted swiftly. If any nation intervened, he believed, it should be the United States. While denying territorial ambitions in the region, in December 1904 Roosevelt declared that “chronic wrongdoing” by any Latin American nation would justify U.S. intervention.

This pronouncement has been called “the Roosevelt Corollary” to the 1823 Monroe Doctrine, which had warned European powers against meddling in Latin America. Now Roosevelt asserted that “wrongdoing” (a word he left undefined) gave the United States the right to step in. Suiting actions to words, the Roosevelt administration took over the Dominican Republic’s customs service for two years and managed its foreign debt. Roosevelt once summed up his foreign-policy approach by quoting what he said was an African proverb, “Speak softly and carry a big stick.”

The foreign policy of the Taft administration (1909–1913) focused on advancing American commercial interests, a policy some called “dollar diplomacy.” In 1911, a U.S.-supported revolution in Nicaragua brought to power Adolfo Díaz,



Woodrow Wilson, Schoolteacher

This 1914 cartoon captures the patronizing self-righteousness of Wilson's approach to Latin America that planted the seeds of long-term resentments.

an officer of an American-owned Nicaraguan mining property. U.S. bankers loaned the Díaz government \$1.5 million in exchange for control of the Nicaraguan national bank, the customs service, and the national railroad. When a revolt against Díaz broke out in 1912, Taft sent in the marines to protect the bankers' investment. Except for one brief interval, they remained until 1933.

In Asia, too, both Roosevelt and Taft sought to project U.S. power and advance the interests of American business. In 1900, Russia exploited the chaos unleashed by the Boxer uprising by sending troops to occupy Manchuria (*man-CHOO-ree-uh*), China's northeastern province. In February 1904, a surprise Japanese attack destroyed Russian ships anchored at Port Arthur, Manchuria. Japan completely dominated in the Russo-Japanese War that followed. For the first time, an Asian power had checked European imperialist expansion.

Roosevelt, while pleased to see Russian expansionism challenged, believed that a Japanese victory would disrupt the Asian balance of power and threaten America's position in the Philippines. Accordingly, he invited Japan and Russia to a peace conference at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. In September 1905, the two rivals signed a peace treaty. Russia recognized Japan's rule in Korea and made other territorial concessions. After this outcome, curbing Japanese

expansionism became America's major objective in Asia. For his role in ending the war, Roosevelt received the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1906, U.S.-Japanese relations soured when the San Francisco school board, reflecting West Coast hostility to Asian immigrants, assigned all Asian children to segregated schools. Japan angrily protested this insult, and Roosevelt persuaded the school board to reverse this discriminatory policy. In return, in 1908 the administration negotiated a "gentlemen's agreement" with Japan by which Tokyo pledged to halt Japanese emigration to America. Racist attitudes and discriminatory laws against Japanese in California continued to poison U.S.-Japanese relations, however.

While Californians worried about the "yellow peril," Japanese journalists watching America's growing military strength wrote of a "white peril." In 1907, Roosevelt ordered sixteen gleaming white battleships on a "training operation" to Japan. Although officially treated as friendly, this "Great White Fleet" underscored America's growing naval might.

Under President Taft, U.S. foreign policy in Asia continued to focus on promoting U.S. commercial interests. A plan for a U.S.-financed railroad in Manchuria did not work out, however. Not only did U.S. bankers find the project too risky, but Russia and Japan signed a treaty carving up Manchuria for commercial purposes, freezing out the Americans.

Wilson and Latin America

Taking office in 1913, Woodrow Wilson criticized his Republican predecessors' expansionist policies. The United States, he pledged, would "never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." But he, too, intervened in Latin America. In 1915, after bloody upheavals in Haiti (**HAY-tee**) and the Dominican Republic, Wilson ordered in the marines. A Haitian (**HAY-shun**) constitution favorable to U.S. commercial interests was overwhelmingly ratified in a 1918 vote supervised by the marines. The marines occupied the Dominican Republic until 1924 and remained in Haiti until 1934.

Events in Mexico triggered Wilson's most serious crisis in Latin America. Mexico had won independence from Spain in 1820, but the nation remained divided between a landowning elite and an impoverished peasantry. In 1911, rebels led by the democratic reformer Francisco Madero ended the thirty-year rule of President Porfirio Díaz, a defender of the wealthy elite. Early in 1913, just as Wilson took office, Mexican troops loyal to General Victoriano Huerta, a full-blooded Indian, overthrew and murdered Madero.

Amid the chaos, Wilson tried to promote good government, protect U.S. investments, and safeguard U.S. citizens living in Mexico or along its border. Reversing the long-standing U.S. policy of recognizing all governments, Wilson refused to recognize Huerta's regime, which he called "a government of butchers." Wilson authorized arms sales to Venustiano Carranza (**kuh-RON-zuh**), a Huerta foe, and blockaded Vera Cruz (**VAIR-uh krooz**) to prevent weapons from reaching Huerta. Announced Wilson, "I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men." In April 1914, seven thousand U.S. troops occupied Veracruz and engaged Huerta's forces. Sixty-five Americans and approximately five hundred Mexicans were killed or wounded. Bowing to U.S. might, Huerta abdicated, Carranza took power, and the U.S. troops withdrew.

But turmoil continued. In January 1916, a bandit chieftain in northern Mexico, Pancho Villa (**PAN-choh VEE-yuh**), murdered sixteen U.S. mining engineers. Villa's gang then burned the town of Columbus, New Mexico, and killed nineteen inhabitants. Sharing the public's outrage, Wilson sent into Mexico a punitive expedition that eventually totaled 12,000 U.S. troops. When Villa brazenly staged another raid into Texas, Wilson ordered 150,000 National Guardsmen to the border—a massive response that stirred anti-American feelings among Mexico's poor, for whom Villa was a folk hero. Villa ended his raids in 1920 when the Mexican government gave him a large land grant, but he was soon assassinated.

These involvements in Asia and Latin America illuminate the U.S. foreign-policy goal: to achieve a global order that would welcome both American political values and American business. They also illustrate the underlying worldview of the old-stock, upper-class men who directed U.S. foreign policy. Convinced of their ethnic, gender, and social superiority, they confidently promoted America's global interests while viewing with patronizing condescension the "backward" societies they sought to manipulate. The vision of a world order based on U.S. ideals would soon find expression in Woodrow Wilson's response to the crisis in Europe.

CHECKING IN

- The Open Door notes, asserting that trade with China must be open to all nations, represented an important part of the American quest for "informal empire."
- The Panama Canal was both a major accomplishment and a symbol of American imperialism.
- The Roosevelt Corollary, announcing that the United States would act as an international policeman in Latin America, was meant to guarantee American preeminence in the Caribbean.
- Wilson intervened in the Mexican Revolution to try to enforce American ideals.
- The Wilsonian view of a world based on American principles shaped American policy during and after World War I.

WAR IN EUROPE, 1914–1917

Considering both immediate and long-term factors, why did the United States go to war in 1917?

When war engulfed Europe in 1914, most Americans wished only to remain aloof. For nearly three years, the United States officially stayed neutral. But by April 1917 cultural ties to Britain and France, economic considerations, visions of a world remade in America's image, and German violations of Wilson's definition of neutral rights all combined to suck America into the maelstrom.

The Coming of War

Although Europe was at peace through much of the nineteenth century, a series of ominous developments raised warning flags. Germany had only achieved national unification in 1871. With many Germans convinced that Germany had lagged in the race for empire, Berlin's goal became modernization, expansion, and military power. Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy signed a mutual-defense treaty in 1882. In 1904 and 1907, Great Britain signed treaties with France and Russia. Meanwhile, the slow-motion collapse of the once-powerful Ottoman empire, centered in Turkey, left in its wake such newly independent nations as Romania, Bulgaria, and Serbia.

Serbian patriots dreamed of expanding their boundaries to include Serbs living in neighboring Bosnia-Herzegovina. Serbia's ally Russia supported these ambitions. The Austro-Hungarian empire, based in Vienna, also dreamed of expansion as Ottoman power faded. In 1908, Austria-Hungary annexed (took over) Bosnia-Herzegovina, alarming Russia and Serbia.

In this volatile atmosphere, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria visited Bosnia in June 1914. As Ferdinand and his wife rode in an open car through Bosnia's capital, Sarajevo, a young Bosnian Serb gunned them down. In response, Austria declared war on Serbia. Russia, aligned with Serbia by a secret treaty, mobilized for war. Germany declared war on Russia and France. Great Britain, linked by treaty to the latter two powers, then declared war on Germany. An assassin's bullets had plunged Europe into war.

Thus began what contemporaries called the Great War, now known as World War I. On one side were Great Britain, Russia, and France, called the Allies. On the other side were the Central Powers: Germany and Austria-Hungary. (Italy, despite its alliance with the Central Powers, joined the Allies in 1915.)

The Perils of Neutrality

President Wilson urged Americans to remain neutral "in thought as well as in action." Most Americans fervently agreed. A popular song summed up the mood: "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier."

Neutrality proved difficult, however. Not only economic ties but also a common language, ancestry, and culture linked many Americans to Britain by strong emotional bonds. Many German-Americans, by contrast, sympathized with Germany, as did some Scandinavian immigrants. Irish-Americans speculated that a German

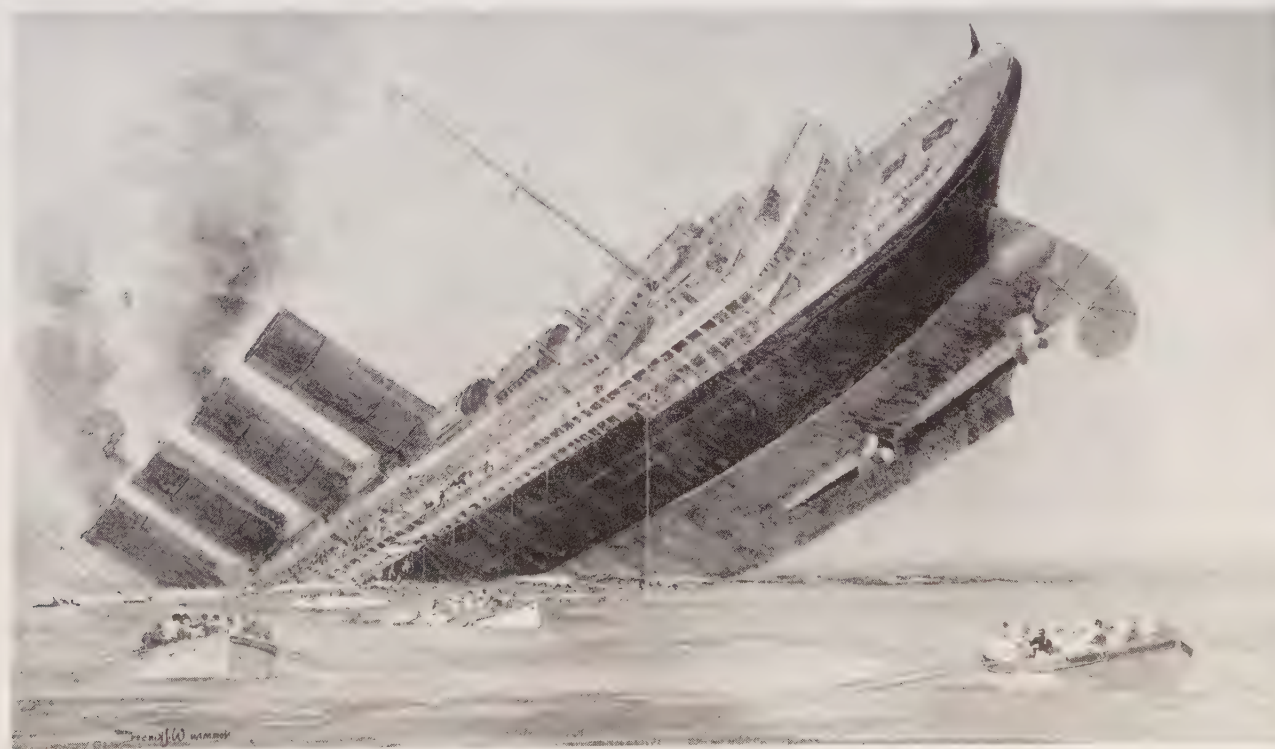
victory might free Ireland from British rule. But most Americans saw staying out of the conflict as the chief goal.

Yet in 1917, America went to war. What caused this turnabout? Fundamentally, Wilson's vision of a peaceful, democratic, and capitalist world order conflicted with his neutrality. Such an international system would be impossible, he believed, if Germany won the war. To shape the peace, America must fight the war.

These underlying ideas influenced Wilson's handling of the war's most troubling immediate challenge: neutral nations' rights. When the war began, Britain intercepted U.S. merchant ships bound for Germany, insisting that their cargo might aid Germany's war effort. Wilson protested, especially when Britain, exploiting its naval advantage, declared the North Sea a war zone and planted it with explosive mines.

But Germany, not Britain, ultimately pushed the United States into war. If Britannia ruled the waves, Germany controlled the ocean depths with its torpedo-equipped submarines, or U-boats. In February 1915, Berlin proclaimed the waters around Great Britain a war zone and warned off all ships. Wilson responded: Germany would be held to "strict accountability" for any loss of U.S. ships or lives.

On May 1, 1915, in a small ad in U.S. newspapers, the German embassy cautioned Americans against travel on British or French vessels. Six days later, a U-boat



The Granger Collection, NYC

The Sinking of the Cunard Liner *Lusitania*, May 7, 1915, off the Irish Coast

The destruction of the *Lusitania* by a German U-boat, portrayed here in an illustration from a British newspaper, took nearly 1,200 lives including those of 128 Americans. This event outraged U.S. public opinion and led to the buildup in military preparedness. But as President Wilson pursued diplomatic exchanges with Germany, nearly two more years would pass before the United States entered the war.

sank the British liner *Lusitania* off Ireland, killing 1,198 passengers, including 128 Americans. (The *Lusitania*, historians later discovered, was secretly carrying munitions destined for Great Britain.) In three stern notes to Germany, Wilson demanded that Berlin stop unrestricted submarine warfare and pay reparations.

The *Lusitania* disaster exposed deep divisions in U.S. public opinion. Many Americans were ready for war. Theodore Roosevelt condemned Wilson—who had counseled patience after the attack—for “abject cowardice and weakness.” The National Security League, a lobby of bankers and industrialists, promoted stepped-up U.S. arms production and organized “preparedness” parades in major cities. By late 1915, Wilson himself called for a military buildup. Lurid British propaganda (much of it false or exaggerated) screamed of atrocities committed by “the Huns” (a derogatory term for Germans).

Others, however, deplored the drift toward war. Some progressives warned that war fever was eroding support for reforms. Jane Addams, for example, lamented that the international movements to reduce infant mortality and improve care for the aged had been “scattered to the winds by the war.” Divisions surfaced even within the Wilson administration. Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, believing Wilson’s *Lusitania* notes too hostile, resigned in June 1915. Early in 1916, Congress considered a bill to ban travel on belligerent ships, but President Wilson successfully opposed it, insisting that the principle of neutral rights must be upheld.

For a time, Wilson’s conciliatory approach seemed to work. Germany ordered U-boats to spare passenger ships, and offered compensation for the Americans lost in the *Lusitania* sinking. In March 1916, however, a German submarine sank a French passenger ship, the *Sussex*, in the English Channel, injuring several Americans. Wilson threatened to break diplomatic relations, which was considered a step toward war. In response, Berlin pledged not to attack merchant vessels without warning, and the crisis eased.

Meanwhile, U.S. banks’ support for the Allies eroded the principle of neutrality. In August 1915, Wilson’s advisers urged him to allow Allies to purchase American munitions and farm products and to authorize substantial loans to Great Britain. Only these measures, they argued, could prevent serious financial problems in the United States. Swayed by such arguments and personally sympathetic to the Allies, Wilson permitted bank loans of \$500 million to the British and French governments. By April 1917, U.S. banks had lent \$2.3 billion to the Allies, in contrast to \$27 million to Germany.

The land war, meanwhile, settled into a grim stalemate. A September 1914 German drive into France bogged down and the two sides dug in, constructing trenches across France from the English Channel to the Swiss border. For more than three years, this line scarcely changed. Occasional offensives devastated the countryside and took a horrendous cost in human life. Trench warfare was a nightmare of mud, lice, rats, artillery bursts, poison gas, and random death.

The war dominated the 1916 presidential election, which pitted Wilson against Republican Charles Evans Hughes, a former New York governor. Somewhat confusingly, Hughes criticized Wilson’s lack of aggressiveness while rebuking him for policies that risked war. While Hughes did well among Irish-Americans and German-Americans, Wilson eked out a narrow victory, aided by women voters in western states that had adopted woman suffrage. The Democrats’ winning campaign slogan, “He kept us out of war,” revealed the strength of popular peace sentiment as late as November 1916.

The United States Enters the War

In January 1917, Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare. Germany's military leaders believed that even if the United States declared war as a result, full-scale U-boat warfare could bring victory before American troops reached the front.

Events now rushed forward. Wilson broke diplomatic relations on February 3. During February and March, U-boats sank five American ships. The British then intercepted a coded telegram from Arthur Zimmermann, the German foreign secretary, to Germany's ambassador to Mexico, promising that if Mexico declared war on the United States, Germany would help restore Mexico's "lost territories" of Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. The "Zimmermann telegram" further inflamed the war spirit in America.

Events in distant Russia also helped create favorable conditions for America's entry into the war. In March 1917, liberal reformers and communist revolutionaries joined in an uprising that overthrew the repressive government of Tsar Nicholas II. A provisional government under the liberal Alexander Kerensky briefly seemed to promise a democratic Russia, making it easier for President Wilson to portray the war as a battle for democracy.

On April 2, Wilson appeared before a joint session of Congress and called for a declaration of war. Applause rang out as Wilson described his vision of America's role in creating a postwar international order to make the world "safe for democracy." After a short but bitter debate, the Senate voted 82 to 6 for war. The House agreed, 373 to 50. Three key factors—German attacks on American shipping, U.S. economic investment in the Allied cause, and American cultural links to the Allies, especially Britain—had propelled the United States into the war.

CHECKING IN

- When World War I erupted, Wilson asked Americans to remain neutral in both thought and action.
- The question of neutral rights on the high seas was a point of dispute with both Great Britain and Germany.
- Americans loaned billions to the Allies, but only a few million to the Central Powers.
- Wilson was reelected in 1916 on the slogan "He kept us out of war."
- Renewed unrestricted submarine warfare and the Zimmermann telegram, suggesting a German-Mexican alliance, gave the United States the final push into World War I.

MOBILIZING AT HOME, FIGHTING IN FRANCE, 1917–1918

How did Washington mobilize the nation for war, and what role did U.S. troops play in the war?

Compared to its effects on Europe, the war only grazed the United States. Russia suffered heavily. France, Great Britain, and Germany fought for more than four years and their armed forces suffered casualties of 70 percent or more; the U.S. casualty rate was 8 percent. The fighting left parts of France and Belgium brutally scarred, whereas North America was physically untouched. Nevertheless, the war profoundly affected America.

Raising, Training, and Testing an Army

As Americans entered the war in April 1917, they found their military woefully unprepared. The regular army consisted of 120,000 men, only a few of whom had combat experience, and an aging officer corps. Ammunition reserves were paltry. The War Department was a jungle of jealous bureaucrats, one of whom hoarded thousands of typewriters as the war approached.

Selective Service Act Draft act to raise an army during World War I

American Expeditionary Force (AEF) The three million American men drafted into a force to fight in Europe during World War I

Raising an army and imposing order on the War Department posed a daunting challenge. Wilson's secretary of war, Newton D. Baker, skillfully implemented the **Selective Service Act**, passed in May 1917. Baker cleverly made the first draft registration day a “festival and patriotic occasion.” By war's end, more than 24 million men had registered, of whom nearly 3 million were drafted.

The army's approach to military training echoed the Progressive Era's moral-control campaigns. The War Department closely monitored recruits' off-duty behavior. The Commission on Training Camp Activities presented films, lectures, and posters on the dangers of alcohol and prostitution. Beginning in December 1917, recruits also underwent intelligence testing. Psychologists eager to demonstrate the usefulness of their new field claimed that measuring recruits' “intelligence quotient” (IQ) could help win the war by identifying potential officers and those best suited to handle more specialized assignments. In fact, the tests mostly revealed that recruits lacked formal education and cultural sophistication, while reinforcing racial and ethnic stereotypes.

Some twelve thousand Native Americans served in the **American Expeditionary Force (AEF)**. While some reformers eager to preserve Indian culture argued for all-Indian units, military officials integrated Native Americans into the general army. Some observers predicted that the wartime experience would hasten the assimilation of Indians into mainstream American life. In addition, some 16,500 women served directly in the AEF as nurses, telephone operators, canteen workers, and secretaries.

Some blacks resisted the draft, especially in the South, but most followed W. E. B. Du Bois's advice urging African-Americans to “close ranks” and support the war. More than 260,000 blacks volunteered or were drafted, and some fifty thousand went to France. However, racism pervaded the military. The navy assigned blacks only to menial positions, and the marines excluded them altogether.

Black troops in some camps endured abuse. One racist senator from Mississippi warned that the sight of “arrogant, strutting” black soldiers would trigger race riots. Tensions reached the breaking point in Houston in August 1917, when some black soldiers, endlessly goaded by local whites, seized weapons from the armory



A Recruitment Poster Targeting African-Americans

In this poster, Abraham Lincoln looks down approvingly as black soldiers battle the German foe. In reality, most black troops were restricted to noncombat roles.

and killed seventeen whites. After court-martial trials, nineteen black soldiers were hanged and sixty-one sentenced to life imprisonment.

Organizing the Economy for War

World War I helped shape modern America. The war advanced such key later developments as an expanded government role in the economy; the growth of new professional and managerial elites; and the spread of mass production, corporate consolidation, and product standardization.

The war led to unprecedented government economic oversight and corporate regulation, long advocated by Populists and progressives. The **War Industries Board (WIB)** was established in 1917 to coordinate military purchasing and ensure production efficiency. President Wilson reorganized the WIB in March 1918 and put the Wall Street financier Bernard Baruch (*bah-ROOK*) in charge. Under Baruch, the WIB allocated raw materials, established production priorities, and induced competing companies to standardize and coordinate their products and processes to save scarce commodities. Meanwhile, the Fuel Administration controlled coal output, regulated fuel prices and consumption, and in March 1918 introduced daylight savings time as a wartime conservation measure.

Baruch's counterpart on the agricultural front was Herbert Hoover, the head of the Food Administration. A mining engineer who had amassed a fortune in Asia, Hoover oversaw the production and allocation of wheat, meat, and sugar to ensure supplies for the army and the food-short Allies. Food Administration posters and ads urged Americans to conserve food. Housewives signed pledges to observe "Meatless Monday" and "Wheatless Wednesday."

In all, nearly five thousand government boards supervised home-front activities. These included the National War Labor Board, which resolved labor-management disputes that jeopardized production, and the Railroad Administration, headed by Treasury Secretary William McAdoo. When a railroad tie-up during the winter of 1917–1918 threatened the flow of supplies to Europe, the Railroad Administration stepped in and soon transformed the thousands of miles of track operated by competing companies into an efficient national system.

The war accelerated corporate consolidation and economic integration. In place of trustbusting, the government now encouraged cooperation among businesses. Overall, the war was good for business. Despite added taxes imposed by Congress, profits soared. After-tax profits in the copper industry, for example, jumped from 12 percent in 1913 to 24 percent in 1917.

The old laissez-faire suspicion of government, which was already eroded, now suffered further blows in 1917–1918. The wartime regulatory agencies disappeared quickly after the war, but their influence lingered. In the 1930s, when the nation faced a different kind of crisis, the government activism of World War I would be remembered.

The American Expeditionary Force in France

As the U.S. military mobilized for combat, Allied prospects looked bleak. German U-boats were battering Allied shipping. French troops mutinied in the spring of 1917 after suffering ghastly casualties. A British offensive along

War Industries Board (WIB)

Major federal agency created to regulate wartime production and allocation of materials

Map 22.2 The United States on the Western Front, 1918

American troops first saw action in the campaign to throw back Germany's spring 1918 offensive in the Somme and Aisne-Marne sectors. The next heavy American engagement came that autumn as part of the Allies' Meuse-Argonne offensive, which ended the war.



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the French-Belgian border gained only four miles at a cost of many thousands killed and wounded.

Russia suffered serious setbacks, contributing to the revolutionary upheaval. The communist faction of the revolution, the Bolsheviks, gained strength when its top leaders, including Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, returned from exile abroad. On November 6, 1917, a Bolshevik coup overthrew Alexander Kerensky's provisional government and effectively removed Russia from the war. Early in 1918, the Bolsheviks signed an armistice with Germany, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, freeing thousands of German troops on the Russian front for fighting in France.

The first U.S. troops reached France in October 1917. Eventually about 2 million American soldiers served in France as members of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) under General **John J. Pershing**. Most men of the AEF at first found the war a great adventure. Plucked from towns and farms, they sailed for Europe on crowded freighters; a lucky few traveled on captured German passenger liners.

The African-Americans with the AEF in France worked mainly as mess-boys (mealtime aides), laborers, and stevedores (ship-cargo handlers). Although discriminatory, the latter assignments vitally aided the war effort. While most African-American troops served behind the front lines, regiments of the all-black 92nd and 93rd infantry divisions saw action under French command in the Second Battle of the Marne and the Meuse-Argonne campaign near the war's end. France awarded the Croix de Guerre, a military honor, to the entire 369th infantry regiment. Only in death was the AEF integrated, since graves in military cemeteries were not racially segregated.

John J. Pershing Commander of the American Expeditionary Force that fought in Europe

In the air, a scant fifteen years after the Wright brothers' first flight, German and Allied planes dropped bombs, reported on troop movements, and engaged in deadly aerial dogfights. The U.S. Army's air corps was established early in 1918. America's output of planes lagged, however, despite pressure from Secretary of War Baker—a rare war-production failure.

American forces saw their first real combat in March 1918 when a German offensive threatened France's English Channel ports. The Allies created a unified command under French general Ferdinand Foch (**fohsh**), and American troops were thrown into the fighting around Amiens (**AH-mee-ehn**) and Armentières (**are-men-TEE-air**) that stemmed the German advance. The French and British wanted to continue the practice of absorbing the Americans into existing units. But for both military and political reasons (including assuring a strong U.S. voice at the peace table), Pershing and his superiors in Washington insisted that the AEF fight in "distinct and separate" units.

In May 1918, Germany launched the second phase of its spring offensive. By the end of the month, the Germans had broken through the Allied lines and had secured a nearly open road to Paris, only fifty miles away. At this critical moment, Americans spearheaded the forces that finally stopped the German advance at the town of Château-Thierry (**shah-TOE tee-AIR-ee**) and nearby Belleau (**BELL-oh**) Wood (see Map 22.2). Eighty-five thousand American troops helped to staunch the final German offensive of the war, a thrust at the ancient cathedral city of Rheims (**reems**). Germany's desperate attempt to take the offensive had failed. Now it was the Allies' turn.

Turning the Tide

On July 18, 1918, the Allies launched their counteroffensive, and the war's last great battle began on September 26 as 1.2 million Americans joined the struggle to drive the

Germans from the Meuse River and the dense Argonne Forest north of Verdun. Poison gas hung in the air, and rats scurried through the mud, gorging on human remains. Americans now endured the filth, vermin, and dysentery familiar to veterans of the trenches. Some welcomed injuries as a ticket out of the battle zone. Others collapsed emotionally and were hospitalized for "shell shock."

The notion of war as a "great adventure" seemed remote indeed in the Meuse-Argonne campaign. Death came in many forms and without ceremony. Bodies, packs, rifles, photos, and letters from home sank indiscriminately into the all-consuming mud. Influenza killed thousands of AEF troops at the front and in training camps back home. Religious and ethical principles faded as men struggled to survive. "We are not men anymore, just savage beasts," wrote a young American. "Love of thy neighbor is forgotten," recalled another, with "all the falsities of a sheltered civilization." The war's brutality would shape the literature of the 1920s, as writers like Ernest Hemingway stripped away the illusions obscuring the reality of mass slaughter.

By early November, the AEF had fulfilled its assignment of cutting the Sedan-Mezières Railroad, a key German supply line. The successful Meuse-Argonne offensive ended the war. On November 11, 1918, Germany surrendered. By conservative estimates, World War I cost 10 million lives. Included in this toll were 112,000 American soldiers—forty-nine thousand in battle and sixty-three thousand from disease, mostly influenza.

CHECKING IN

- The U.S. government instituted the draft to fill manpower needs.
- Government regulation of the economy, oversight of resources, and collaboration with business reached into American households and became accepted facts of life during the war.
- The Allied cause looked grim when America entered the war, but the 2 million American soldiers who served in France would play a key role in halting the last German offensive.
- American troops then spearheaded the Allied counteroffensive that led to the armistice in November 1918.

PROMOTING THE WAR AND SUPPRESSING DISSENT

How did Americans respond to propaganda and suppression of dissent?

In their own way, the war's domestic effects were as important as its battles. Spurred by government propaganda, patriotic fervor gripped America. The war fever, in turn, encouraged intellectual conformity and smothered dissent. Fueling the repressive spirit, government authorities and private vigilante groups hounded socialists, pacifists, and other dissidents, trampling citizens' constitutional rights.

Advertising the War

To President Wilson, selling the war at home was crucial to success in France. "It is not an army we must shape and train for war, it is a nation," he declared. The administration drew on the new professions of advertising and public relations to pursue this goal. Treasury Secretary McAdoo orchestrated a series of government bond drives, called Liberty Loans, that financed about two-thirds of the war's \$35.5 billion cost.

Posters exhorted citizens to "Fight or Buy Bonds." Parades, rallies, and appearances by movie stars all aided the cause. Patriotic war songs reached a large public through phonograph recordings. Beneath the ballyhoo ran a note of coercion. Only "a friend of Germany," McAdoo warned, would refuse to buy bonds. The balance of the government's war costs came from taxes. Using the power granted it by the Sixteenth Amendment, Congress imposed wartime income taxes that reached 70 percent at the top level.

Journalist George Creel headed the key wartime propaganda agency, the **Committee on Public Information (CPI)**. While claiming merely to combat rumors with facts, the Creel committee in reality publicized the government's version of events and discredited all who questioned that version. Posters, news releases, advertisements, and movies all trumpeted the government's sanitized version of events. The CPI poured foreign-language publications into the cities to ensure the loyalty of recent immigrants. Creel also organized the "four-minute men": a network of 75,000 speakers throughout the nation who gave patriotic talks to audiences of all kinds. Teachers, writers, religious leaders, and magazine editors overwhelmingly supported the war. These custodians of culture viewed the conflict as a struggle to defend threatened values and standards. Alan Seeger, a young Harvard graduate who volunteered to fight for France in 1916, wrote highly popular poems romanticizing the war. An artillery barrage became "the magnificent orchestra of war." The "sense of being the instrument of Destiny," wrote Seeger, represented the "supreme experience" of combat. He was killed in action in 1916.

Progressive reformers who had applauded Wilson's domestic program now cheered his war. Herbert Croly, Walter Lippmann, and other intellectuals associated with the *New Republic* magazine zealously backed the war. According to educator John Dewey, the war presented exciting "social possibilities." The government's wartime activism, he argued, could be channeled to reform purposes when peace returned. Internationally, America's participation in the war would transform an imperialistic struggle into a global democratic crusade.

Committee on Public Information (CPI) Wartime propaganda agency established in April 1917; led by journalist George Creel

Wartime Intolerance and Dissent

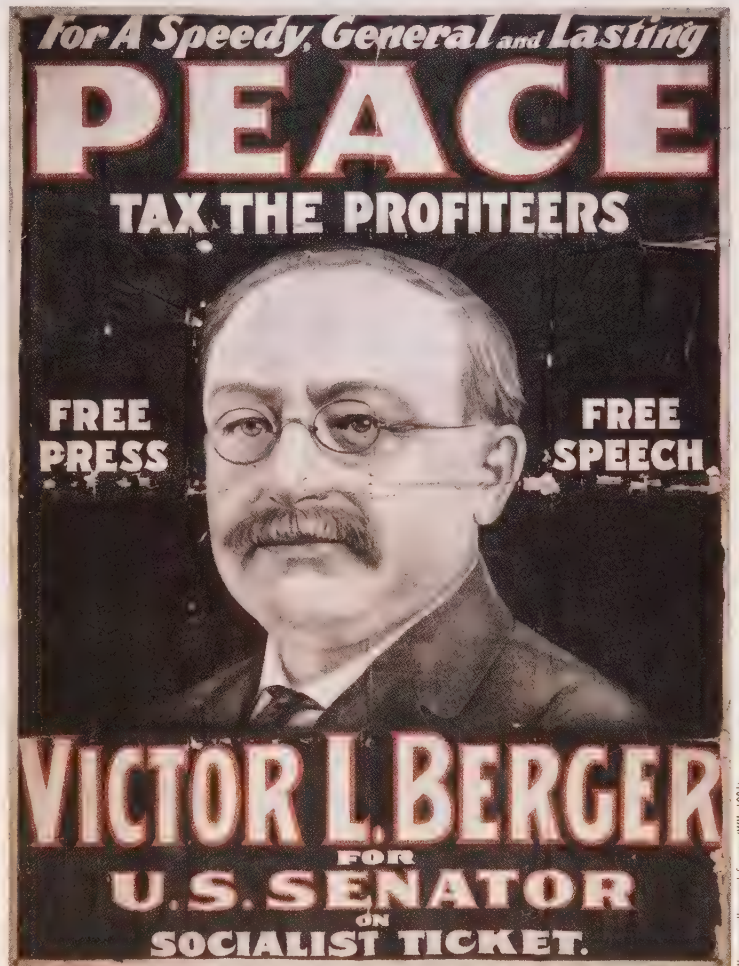
Responding to the propaganda, some Americans lashed out at all things German. Reports of sabotage by German agents, including mysterious fires at munitions plants in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, fanned the flames of fear. Libraries banished German books, and towns with German names changed them. An Iowa politician charged that “90 percent of all the men and women who teach the German language are traitors.” Some restaurant menus replaced hamburgers with “liberty sandwiches.” The Boston Symphony Orchestra dismissed its German-born conductor. A popular evangelist, Billy Sunday, proclaimed, “If you turn hell upside down you will find ‘Made in Germany’ stamped on the bottom.”

The zealots also targeted American citizens suspected of pro-German or anti-war sentiments. Some were forced to kiss the flag or recite the Pledge of Allegiance. A Cincinnati mob horsewhipped a pacifist minister. Theodore Roosevelt branded anti-war Senator Robert La Follette “an unhung traitor.” Columbia University fired two anti-war professors. In Collinsville, Illinois, in April 1918, a mob lynched a German-American coal miner, Robert Prager. When a jury freed the ringleaders, a jury member shouted, “Nobody can say we aren’t loyal now.”

Despite the persecution, many Americans persisted in opposing the war. Some were immigrants with ancestral ties to Germany. Others were religious pacifists, including Quakers, Mennonites, and Jehovah’s Witnesses. Of some sixty-five thousand men who registered as conscientious objectors (COs), twenty-one thousand were drafted. The army assigned most to noncombat duty, such as cleaning latrines. Those who rejected this alternative were sent to military prisons.

Socialist leaders such as Eugene Debs denounced the war as a capitalist struggle for markets, with the soldiers as cannon fodder. The U.S. declaration of war, they insisted, mainly reflected Wall Street’s desire to protect its loans to Great Britain and France. But other socialists supported the war, dividing the party. The war split the women’s movement as well. While some leaders joined Jane Addams in opposition, others endorsed the war while keeping their own goals in view.

Draft resistance extended beyond the ranks of conscientious objectors. An estimated 2.4 to 3.6 million young men failed to register for the draft, and of those that did,



Milwaukee Socialist Leader Victor Berger Opposes War Profiteers and the Suppression of Free Speech

Elected to Congress in 1918, Berger was denied a seat because of his conviction under the wartime Espionage Act. The Supreme Court later reversed the conviction, and Berger served in Congress from 1923 to 1929.

about 12 percent did not appear when drafted or deserted from training camp. The rural South saw high levels of draft resistance, especially because the urban elites who ran draft boards were more likely to defer young men of their own class than poor farmers, white or black, fueling class resentment.

African-Americans had added reasons to oppose the draft. Of southern blacks who registered, one-third were drafted, compared to one-fourth of whites. White draft boards argued that low-income black families could more easily spare a male breadwinner. But the dynamics of race worked in complex ways: Some southern whites, fearful of arming black men even for military service, favored drafting only whites.

One war critic, Randolph Bourne, a young journalist, rejected John Dewey's argument that reformers could direct the war to their own purposes. "If the war is too strong for you to prevent," he asked, "how is it going to be weak enough for you to . . . mould to your liberal purposes?" Many prowar intellectuals eventually agreed. By 1919, Dewey conceded that the war, far from promoting reform, had encouraged reaction and intolerance.

Espionage Act Criminalized virtually any antiwar activity

Sedition Amendment Curtailed First Amendment rights in criticizing war or government

Suppressing Dissent by Law

Wartime intolerance also surfaced in federal laws and official actions. The **Espionage Act** of June 1917 set fines and prison sentences for a variety of loosely defined antiwar activities. The **Sedition Amendment** to the Espionage Act (May 1918) imposed stiff penalties on anyone convicted of using "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" about the government, the Constitution, the flag, or the military.

Wilson's wartime attorney general, Thomas W. Gregory, used these laws to suppress dissent. Opponents of the war should expect no mercy "from an outraged people and an avenging government," he said. Under this sweeping legislation and similar state laws, authorities arrested some fifteen hundred pacifists, socialists, IWW leaders, and other war critics. One socialist, Rose Pastor Stokes, received a ten-year prison sentence (later commuted) for telling an audience, "I am for the people, and the government is for the profiteers." Eugene Debs spent three years in prison for a speech discussing the economic causes of the war.

Under the Espionage Act, Postmaster General Albert S. Burleson banned socialist periodicals, including *The Masses*. In January 1919, Congressman-elect Victor Berger was convicted for publishing antiwar articles in his socialist newspaper, the *Milwaukee Leader*. (The Supreme Court reversed Berger's conviction in 1921.) Upton Sinclair protested to President Wilson that no one of Burleson's "childish ignorance" should wield such power. Still, Wilson did little to restrain the Postmaster General's excesses. The 1917 Bolshevik takeover in Russia sharpened the attacks on domestic radicals.

In 1919, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Espionage Act convictions of war critics. In *Schenck v. United States*, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., writing for a unanimous court, justified such repression in cases where a person's speech posed a "clear and present danger" to the nation. When the war ended, Wilson vetoed a bill repealing the Espionage Act, increasing the likelihood that the miasma of conformity and suspicion would linger into the postwar era.

CHECKING IN

- The Wilson administration drew successfully on advertising techniques to popularize the war and to sell bonds.
- George Creel headed the effective propaganda campaign of the Wilson administration.
- Wartime emotion led to intolerance; virtually all things German became taboo.
- Although most progressives supported the war, there were a few critics, such as Randolph Bourne.
- The Espionage Act and the Sedition Amendment suppressed free speech and led to extreme reactions, as hundreds went to prison.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TRENDS IN WARTIME AMERICA

What was the war's economic, political, and social impact on the American home front?

In many diverse ways, the war affected the lives of millions of Americans, including industrial workers, farmers, women, and blacks. Another of the war's byproducts, a deadly influenza pandemic, took a grievous toll. Although some Progressive Era reforms advanced, overall the war weakened the reform movement.

Boom Times in Industry and Agriculture

World War I benefited the U.S. economy. From 1914 to 1918, factory output grew by more than one-third. Even with many men in uniform, the civilian work force expanded by 1.3 million between 1916 and 1918. Prices rose, but so did wages. Even unskilled workers enjoyed wartime wage increases averaging nearly 20 percent. Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, urged workers not to strike during the war. With the economy booming, most workers observed the no-strike request.

The war's social impact took many forms. Job seekers pouring into industrial centers strained housing, education, and municipal services. The consumption of cigarettes more than tripled. Reflecting wartime prosperity, automobile production jumped from 460,000 in 1914 to 1.8 million in 1917. Farmers profited, too. With European farm production disrupted, U.S. agricultural prices more than doubled between 1913 and 1918, and farmers' real income rose significantly.

This agricultural boom proved a mixed blessing. Farmers who borrowed heavily to expand production faced a credit squeeze when farm prices fell after the war. In the 1920s and 1930s, hard-pressed farmers would look back to the war years as a golden age of prosperity.

Blacks Migrate Northward

The war accelerated the exodus of southern blacks. An estimated half-million African-Americans moved north during the war, and most settled in cities. Chicago's black population swelled from 44,000 in 1910 to 110,000 in 1920 and Cleveland's expanded from 8,000 to 34,000.

With European immigration disrupted by the war, booming industries hired more black workers. Labor agents along with African-American newspapers like the *Chicago Defender* spread the word. One southern black, newly settled near Chicago, wrote home, "Nothing here but money, and it is not hard to get." Impoverished southern blacks welcomed the prospect of earning three dollars a day or more in a region where racism seemed less intense. By 1920, 1.5 million African-Americans were working in northern industry.

This vast population movement had widespread social ramifications. New city churches and storefront missions met the spiritual needs of deeply religious migrants from the South. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored

People (NAACP) grew from nine thousand members before the war to nearly one hundred thousand by the early 1920s. Heightened race consciousness and activism of the war years helped create the groundwork for the civil-rights movement that lay ahead. The concentration of blacks in New York City also prepared the way for the cultural flowering known as the Harlem Renaissance (see Chapter 23).

Still, African-American newcomers in northern cities faced severe challenges. White workers resented the labor competition, and white homeowners lashed out as jammed black neighborhoods spilled over into surrounding areas. Tensions sometimes sparked deadly riots. An outbreak on July 2, 1917, in East St. Louis, Illinois, led to the deaths of thirty-nine blacks. A few weeks later, an NAACP protest in New York City included one banner that echoed Wilson's phrase justifying U.S. involvement in the war: "Mr. President, Why Not Make AMERICA Safe for Democracy?"

Women in Wartime

The war affected women profoundly. Feminist leaders like Carrie Chapman Catt hoped that the war would lead to full equality and greater opportunity for women. For a time, these goals seemed attainable. In addition to the women in the AEF and in wartime volunteer agencies, about 1 million women worked in industry. Thousands more held other jobs, from streetcar conductors to bricklayers.

As the woman-suffrage movement gained momentum, a key victory came in November 1917 when New York voters amended the state constitution to permit women to vote. In Washington, Alice Paul and members of her National Woman's Party (see Chapter 21) picketed the White House. Several protesters were jailed and, when they went on a hunger strike, they were force-fed. Under growing pressure, Wilson declared that women's war service had earned them the right to vote. In 1919, the House and Senate overwhelmingly passed the **Nineteenth Amendment** granting women the right to vote. Ratification followed in 1920.

Beyond this victory, however, the war did little to better women's status permanently. Relatively few women actually entered the work force for the first time in 1917–1918; most simply moved to better-paying jobs. As for the women in the AEF, the War Department refused their requests for military rank and benefits. At the war's end, many women lost their jobs to returning veterans. In 1920, the percentage of U.S. women in the paid labor force was actually slightly lower than it had been in 1910.

Public Health Crisis: The 1918 Influenza Pandemic

Amid battlefield casualties and home-front social changes, the nation in 1918 coped with a global outbreak of influenza, a highly contagious viral infection. The **influenza pandemic** killed an estimated 50 to 100 million people worldwide.

Originating in Africa, the virus spread from battlefields in France to U.S. military camps, striking Fort Riley, Kansas, in March 1918 and quickly advancing to

Nineteenth Amendment The amendment granting women the right to vote; ratified in 1920

influenza pandemic Outbreak of illness in 1918 on the heels of the World War I devastation, in which more than a half million Americans died of influenza

other bases and the urban population. The flu hit the cities hard. After a September Liberty Loan rally in Philadelphia, doctors reported 635 new influenza cases. Many cities forbade public gatherings. In the worst month, October, influenza killed 195,000 Americans. The total U.S. death toll reached about 550,000, over six times the number of AEF battle deaths in France.

Despite the development of a flu vaccine in the 1940s, flu pandemics remained a threat. In 2004, using tissue preserved from two U.S. soldiers who had died of influenza in 1918, scientists successfully synthesized the 1918 virus for research purposes.

The War and Progressivism

The war had mixed effects on Progressive Era reform movements. It strengthened the coercive, moral-control aspect of progressivism, including the drive for the prohibition of alcohol. When the **Eighteenth Amendment** establishing national prohibition passed Congress in December 1917, it was widely seen as a war measure. Ratified in 1919, it went into effect on January 1, 1920.

Similarly, the war strengthened the Progressive Era antiprostitution campaign. The War Department closed red-light districts near military bases, including New Orleans's famed Storyville. (As Storyville's jazz musicians moved north, jazz reached a national audience.) Meanwhile, "protective bureaus" urged women to uphold standards of sexual morality. In Boston, female social workers hid in the Common after dark to apprehend young women dating soldiers from nearby bases.

Labor reforms advanced as well. The Railroad Administration and the **War Labor Board (WLB)** pressured factory owners to introduce the eight-hour workday and recognize unions' right to bargain with management. Under these favorable conditions, union membership rose from 2.7 million in 1916 to more than 5 million by 1920. In addition, the Bureau of War Risk Insurance (BWRI) provided direct aid to soldiers' families. By the war's end, over 2 million families were receiving regular BWRI checks.

Overall, however, the war weakened the progressive social-justice impulse. While the war brought increased regulation of the economy—a key progressive goal—business interests often dominated the regulatory agencies, and they were quickly dismantled after the war. The government's repression of radicals and antiwar dissenters fractured the progressive coalition and ushered in a decade of reaction. The 1918 midterm election signaled the shift: The Democrats lost both houses of Congress to a deeply conservative Republican Party.

Nevertheless, taking a longer view, reform energies, after diminishing in the 1920s, would reemerge in the depression decade of the 1930s. And as Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal took shape (see Chapter 24), the memory of such World War I agencies as the War Labor Board, the United States Housing Corporation, and the Bureau of War Risk Insurance provided ideas and inspiration.

Eighteenth Amendment

Established national prohibition to encourage and regulate morality during wartime

War Labor Board (WLB)

Wartime agency that encouraged unionization and collective bargaining as a means of avoiding labor discord

CHECKING IN

- The war produced boom times for farmers and manufacturers but left farmers in a credit squeeze later.
- Black migration to northern cities accelerated, but racial tensions also traveled north.
- Women advanced in the work force in large numbers but were seen only as temporary replacements for men.
- The war bolstered some progressive goals: greater government regulation of the economy, woman suffrage, and labor laws.
- In spite of the progressive advances, the war undermined the social-justice movement, as conservatives gained ground amid the wartime repression.

JOYOUS ARMISTICE, BITTER AFTERMATH, 1918–1920

How did the League of Nations begin, and why did the Senate reject U.S. membership in the League?

The euphoria that greeted the November 1918 armistice proved short lived. Having defined America's war aims in lofty terms, Woodrow Wilson dominated the 1919 peace conference but failed in his most cherished objective—American membership in the League of Nations. Amid a sour climate of racism and intolerance, the voters in 1920 repudiated Wilsonian idealism and internationalism and elected a conservative Republican as president.

Wilson's Fourteen Points; the Armistice

President Wilson planned to put his personal stamp on the peace. American involvement, he believed, could transform a sordid squabble for power into something higher and finer—a crusade for a new, more democratic world order.

Addressing Congress in January 1918, Wilson summed up U.S. war aims in fourteen points. Eight of these promised the subject peoples of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires the right of self-determination. A ninth point insisted that imperial disputes should consider the interests of the colonized peoples. The remaining five points offered Wilson's larger postwar vision: a world of free navigation, free trade, reduced armaments, openly negotiated treaties, and "a general association of nations" to resolve conflicts peacefully. The **Fourteen Points** helped solidify American support for the war, especially among liberals. They seemed proof that America was fighting for noble motives, not selfish aims.

Fourteen Points Wilson's blueprint for a better world; emphasized self-determination

In early October 1918, facing defeat, Germany proposed an armistice based on Wilson's Fourteen Points. The British and French hesitated, but when Wilson threatened to negotiate a separate peace, they agreed. Meanwhile, in Berlin, Kaiser Wilhelm II had abdicated and a German republic had been proclaimed.

In the early morning of November 11, 1918, the Allied commander Marshal Foch and his German counterparts signed an armistice ending hostilities at 11:00 A.M. Rockets burst over the front that night, not in anger but in relief and celebration. Back home, cheering throngs filled the streets. "Everything for which America has fought has been accomplished," Wilson proclaimed.

The Versailles Peace Conference, 1919

Unwisely, Wilson decided to lead the U.S. delegation to the peace conference himself. The strain of long bargaining sessions would take its toll on his frail nerves. Wilson compounded his mistake by naming only one Republican to the delegation, an elderly diplomat with little influence in the party. Selecting more prominent Republicans might have spared Wilson future grief. The Democrats' loss of Congress in 1918 offered a further ill omen.

Wilson received a hero's welcome in Europe. Shouts of "Voodrow Veelson" rang out in Paris, in Britain children spread flowers in his path, and in Italy an exuberant official compared him to Jesus Christ.

The euphoria faded, however, when the peace conference began on January 18, 1919, at the palace of Versailles (**verh-SIGH**) near Paris. A Council of Four officiated, comprising the heads of state of the Allied powers: Italy, France, Great Britain, and the United States. (Japan participated as well.) The French and British came to the **Versailles Peace Conference** determined to punish Germany for their nations' wartime losses. Their vindictive agenda bore little relation to Wilson's liberal vision. As French statesman Georges Clemenceau remarked, "God gave us the Ten Commandments and we broke them. Mr. Wilson has given us the Fourteen Points. We shall see."

Differences surfaced quickly. Italy demanded a port on the eastern Adriatic Sea. Japan insisted on keeping the trading rights it had seized from Germany in China. Clemenceau and Lloyd George were obsessed with revenge. At one point, an appalled Wilson threatened to leave the conference.

Reflecting this toxic climate, the peace treaty signed by a sullen German delegation in June 1919 was harshly punitive. Germany was disarmed, stripped of its colonies, forced to admit sole blame for the war, and saddled with reparation payments of \$56 billion. France regained the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine and took control for fifteen years of Germany's coal-rich Saar Basin. The treaty demilitarized Germany's western border and transferred a slice of eastern Germany to Poland. Italy received land, and Japan got the economic concessions it wanted. All told, the treaty cost Germany one-tenth of its population and one-eighth of its territory. These harsh terms, bitterly resented in Germany, planted the seeds of World War II.

However, some treaty provisions did reflect Wilson's themes of democracy and self-determination. The treaty recognized the independence of Poland and the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Separate treaties provided for the independence of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, new nations carved from the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. Palestine, a part of Turkey's collapsed Ottoman empire, went to Great Britain under a mandate arrangement. In 1917, the British issued the Balfour Declaration supporting a Jewish "national home" in the region while also acknowledging the rights of the non-Jewish Palestinians.

But the statesmen of Versailles ignored the aspirations of colonized peoples in Asia and Africa. Nor did the peacemakers come to terms with revolutionary Russia. In August 1918 a fourteen-nation Allied army, including some seven thousand U.S. troops, landed at various Russian ports, ostensibly to secure them from German attack and to protect Allied war equipment. In fact, the aim was to overthrow the new Bolshevik regime, whose communist ideology terrified European and American leaders. Wilson and the other Allied leaders agreed to support a Russian military leader waging a last-ditch struggle against the Bolsheviks. Not until 1933 would the United States recognize the Soviet Union.

The Fight over the League of Nations

Wilson focused on his one shining achievement at Versailles—the creation of a new international organization, the **League of Nations**. The agreement to establish

Versailles Peace Conference

Negotiations for a peace settlement in France; the resulting settlement harshly punished Germany, laying the seeds of future conflict

League of Nations Wilson's plan for an international deliberative body, viewed as necessary to keep the peace; rejected by the U.S. Senate; the United States never joined

the League, written into the treaty, embodied Wilson's vision of a new world order of peace and justice. But Wilson's League faced major hurdles. A warning shot came in February 1919 when thirty-nine Republican senators signed a letter rejecting the League in its present form.

When Wilson sent the treaty to the Senate for ratification in July 1919, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge bottled it up in the Foreign Relations Committee. To rally popular opinion, Wilson left Washington in September for a national speaking tour. Covering more than nine thousand miles by train, Wilson defended the League before large and friendly audiences. People wept as he described his visits to American war cemeteries in France and sketched his vision of a new world order. But the trip exhausted Wilson, and on October 2 he suffered a stroke that for a time left him near death. He spent the rest of his term mostly in bed or in a wheelchair, a reclusive invalid, his mind clouded, his fragile emotions betraying him into vindictive actions and tearful outbursts. He broke with close advisers and dismissed Secretary of State Lansing, accusing him of disloyalty. In January 1920, his physician advised him to resign, but Wilson refused.

Wilson's first wife, Ellen, had died in 1914. His strong-willed second wife, Edith Galt, played a crucial role behind the scenes during this crisis. She hid Wilson's condition from the public and decided who could see him. Cabinet members, diplomats, and congressional leaders were barred from the White House. Because the Twenty-fifth Amendment, dealing with issues of presidential disability, was not adopted until 1967, the impasse continued.

The League drama unfolded against this grim backdrop. On September 10, 1919, the Foreign Relations Committee at last sent the treaty to the Senate, but with a series of amendments. The Senate split into three groups. First were Democrats who supported the League covenant without changes. Second were Republican "Irreconcilables," who opposed the League absolutely. They feared that League membership would dangerously restrict U.S. freedom of action and entangle America with foreign powers they viewed as corrupt. Finally, a group of Republican "Reservationists," led by Lodge, demanded amendments as a condition of their support.

Had Wilson accepted compromise, the Senate would probably have ratified the Versailles treaty. But Wilson's illness aggravated his tendency toward rigidity. Isolated in the White House, he instructed Senate Democrats to vote against the treaty, which now included Lodge's reservations. Although international-law specialists argued that these reservations would not significantly weaken U.S. participation in the League, Wilson stood firm.

Despite Wilson's speaking tour, the public did not rally behind the League. On November 19, 1919, pro-League Democrats obeying Wilson's instructions and anti-League Irreconcilables joined forces to defeat the version of the Versailles treaty that included Lodge's reservations. A second vote in March 1920 produced the same result. The United States would not join the forty-four nations who in January 1920 launched the League of Nations, the forerunner of the United Nations. What might have been Wilson's crowning achievement had turned to ashes.

Racism and Red Scare, 1919–1920

The war's strident patriotism left a bitter aftertaste. The years 1919–1920 brought new racial violence and anti-radical hysteria. Seventy-six blacks were lynched in 1919,

the worst toll in fifteen years. The victims included ten veterans, several still in uniform.

The worst violence exploded in Chicago, where simmering racial tension erupted on a hot afternoon in July 1919. When a black youth swimming at a Lake Michigan beach drowned after whites pelted him with stones, black neighborhoods erupted in fury. A thirteen-day reign of terror followed as white and black marauders engaged in random attacks and arson. The outbreak left fifteen whites and twenty-three blacks dead, over five hundred injured, and more than a thousand families, mostly black, homeless.

Wartime antiradicalism crested in the Red Scare of 1919–1920. (Communists were called “reds” because of the red flag favored by revolutionary organizations.) A rash of strikes in 1919 deepened overwrought fears of a communist takeover in America. When the IWW and other unions called a general strike in Seattle, the panicky mayor called for federal troops to maintain order. Anxiety crackled again in April, when various public officials received packages containing bombs. One severely injured a senator’s maid; another damaged the home of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer.

Antiradical paranoia also infected politics. In 1919, the House of Representatives refused to seat Milwaukee socialist Victor Berger, recently indicted under the Espionage Act. Milwaukee voters promptly reelected him, but the House stood firm. The New York legislature expelled several socialist members. The Justice Department set up an antiradical division under young J. Edgar Hoover, future head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who ordered the arrest of hundreds of suspected communists and radicals. In December 1919, the government deported 249 Russian-born aliens, including Emma Goldman, a prominent lecturer and birth-control advocate.

On January 2, 1920, in a Justice Department dragnet, federal marshals and local police raided the homes of suspected radicals and the headquarters of radical organizations in thirty-two cities. Without search warrants or arrest warrants, they arrested more than four thousand persons (some 550 were eventually deported) and seized a horde of papers. Boston police paraded arrested persons through the streets in handcuffs and chains and jammed them into unsanitary cells without formal charges or the opportunity to post bail.

Palmer claimed that a “blaze of revolution was sweeping over every American institution of law and order . . . licking at the altars of the churches, leaping into the belfry of the school bell, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes . . . burning up the foundations of society.” But the hysteria subsided as Palmer’s irrational predictions failed to materialize. When a bomb exploded in New York City’s financial district in September 1920, killing thirty-eight people, most Americans saw the deed as the work of an isolated fanatic, not evidence of approaching revolution.

The Election of 1920

As the 1920 election approached, the invalid Wilson, lost in fantasy, considered seeking a third term, but was dissuaded. Few heeded his call to make the election a “solemn referendum” on the League. When the Democrats convened in San

Warren G. Harding Elected in 1920; the well-meaning but undistinguished successor to Woodrow Wilson

CHECKING IN

- Wilson saw the war as an opportunity to spread democracy globally.
- The Fourteen Points speech summed up Wilsonian ideals; however, European leaders were skeptical.
- Wilson was hailed by the European public but could not control the Versailles negotiations.
- Although it established the League of Nations, the Versailles treaty solved none of the problems that had led to World War I; instead, it laid the groundwork for World War II.
- The Senate ultimately refused to ratify the treaty, and the United States did not join the League.
- The election of 1920 was interpreted as a rejection of the crusading spirit, both at home and overseas.

San Francisco, the delegates nominated James M. Cox, the mildly progressive governor of Ohio. As Cox's running mate they chose the young assistant secretary of the navy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, who possessed a potent political name.

The confident Republicans, meeting in Chicago, nominated Senator **Warren G. Harding** of Ohio, an amiable politician of little distinction. For vice president, they chose Massachusetts governor Calvin Coolidge, who had won attention in 1919 with his denunciation of a Boston policemen's strike. Harding's vacuous campaign speeches reminded one critic of "an army of pompous phrases moving over the landscape in search of an idea." But his reassuring promise of a return to "normalcy" resonated with many voters, and he won by a landslide. Nearly a million citizens defiantly voted for socialist Eugene Debs, still imprisoned for his earlier antiwar speeches.

The election dashed all hope for American entry into the League of Nations. Senator Lodge expressed grim satisfaction that the voters had ripped "Wilsonism" up by the roots. The sense of high purpose Wilson had evoked in April 1917 seemed remote indeed as Americans turned to a new president and a new era.

Chapter Summary

What goals underlay America's early-twentieth-century involvements in Asia and Latin America? (page 526)

The early twentieth century saw intensifying U.S. involvement abroad. This new globalism arose from a desire to promote U.S. business interests internationally while exporting American values to other societies. Americans demanded an "Open Door" to the China trade. Theodore Roosevelt seized Panama and built the canal, then declared the Caribbean to be under American custodianship. Wilson intervened in the Mexican Revolution in an attempt to shoehorn Mexican politics into an American mold.

Considering both immediate and long-term factors, why did the United States go to war in 1917? (page 532)

Wilson attempted to maintain neutrality, but issues of neutral rights on the high seas and loans to the Allies made neutrality almost impossible to attain. The deaths of Americans on British ships, such as the *Lusitania*, poisoned U.S. relations with Germany, and the Zimmermann telegram, suggesting a German-Mexican alliance, ultimately pushed the United States into the war.

KEY TERMS

Boxer Rebellion (p. 527)
 Open Door notes (p. 527)
 Panama Canal (p. 528)
 Selective Service Act (p. 536)
 American Expeditionary Force (AEF) (p. 536)
 War Industries Board (WIB) (p. 537)
 John J. Pershing (p. 538)
 Committee on Public Information (CPI) (p. 540)
 Espionage Act (p. 542)
 Sedition Amendment (p. 542)
 Nineteenth Amendment (p. 544)
 influenza pandemic (p. 544)

How did Washington mobilize the nation for war, and what role did U.S. troops play in the war? (page 535)

During the war, the federal government influenced the lives of Americans as never before. The United States initiated the draft and called 3 million men into service. Government regulation of the economy and the nation's resources, exemplified by the War Industries Board and the Food Administration, greatly increased, as did government-business collaboration. Two million Americans fought in France, arriving just in time to stop Germany's 1918 summer offensive and lead the Allies' counteroffensive.

KEY TERMS continued

Eighteenth Amendment (p. 545)
War Labor Board (WLB) (p. 545)
Fourteen Points (p. 546)
Versailles Peace Conference (p. 547)
League of Nations (p. 547)
Warren G. Harding (p. 550)

How did Americans respond to propaganda and suppression of dissent? (page 540)

The Wilson administration drew successfully on the techniques of modern advertising to "sell" the war and conducted massive campaigns to sell war bonds. The all-too-effective anti-German propaganda led to intolerance and distrust of almost everything German. Some Americans criticized the war, but to do so was risky. The Espionage Act and the Sedition Amendment intensified the climate of intolerance and were used to jail hundreds of dissenters.

What was the war's economic, political, and social impact on the American home front? (page 543)

World War I had a profound impact on the United States. Farm production and prosperity soared, as did industry, but farmers faced a credit squeeze after the war. Large numbers of blacks left the South to live in northern cities; racism followed them. Women advanced in the work force in large numbers, but most lost their positions to returning troops. Some progressive goals benefited from the war—government regulation, woman suffrage, and labor laws—but the war ultimately revived conservative attitudes, sparked fear of radicalism, and extinguished the progressive spirit for a generation.

How did the League of Nations begin, and why did the Senate reject U.S. membership in the League? (page 546)

Wilson's goals, expressed in the Fourteen Points, included spreading democracy and reforming the international political system. Essentially, he wanted to Americanize the world. However, he never achieved most of these goals. Negotiations at Versailles were dominated by European leaders' thirst for vengeance, and the Versailles treaty guaranteed future conflict. Even participation in the League of Nations, which Wilson saw as the centerpiece of his new world order, eluded his grasp because of Republican opposition and the president's own stubbornness.



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CHAPTER 23

The 1920s: Coping with Change

1920–1929



A Pleasure-Mad Decade

CHAPTER PREVIEW

A New Economic Order

What economic innovations came in the 1920s, and what was their effect on different social groups?

Standpat Politics in a Decade of Change

What political and social ideas shaped the administrations of Presidents Harding and Coolidge?

Mass Society, Mass Culture

What developments underlay 1920s' mass culture, and how did they affect American life and leisure?

Cultural Ferment and Creativity

What social developments contributed to the cultural creativity of the 1920s?

A Society in Conflict

What events or movements revealed the major social and cultural conflicts of the 1920s?

Hoover at the Helm

How did Herbert Hoover's social and political thought differ from that of Harding and Coolidge?

Among the many immigrants arriving at Ellis Island in 1913 was the eighteen-year-old son of a veterinarian from a southern Italian village: Rodolfo Alfonso

Raffaello Piero Filiberto Guglielmi di Valentina d'Antognuola. After moving to Hollywood—and wisely shortening his name to “Rudolph Valentino”—he appeared in fifteen short films in 1919–1920. For the next six years, Valentino reigned as Hollywood's most popular male star. With his smoldering good looks and piercing dark eyes, he exuded sex appeal. In August 1926, at only thirty-one, Valentino died

after surgery for a perforated ulcer. Lines of female fans stretched for blocks around the funeral home.

The popularity of the movies and their larger-than-life stars was only one novelty in a turbulent decade. These years also saw a torrent of new consumer goods, a flood of automobiles, and a babble of sound from millions of radios and phonographs. The decade also saw changing cultural values, creativity in the arts, and bitter social conflicts. With good reason, it soon acquired a nickname, “the Roaring Twenties.” Many features of contemporary America may be traced to the 1920s. This chapter explores how different groups of Americans responded to technological, social, and cultural changes that could be both exciting and threatening.

A NEW ECONOMIC ORDER

What economic innovations came in the 1920s, and what was their effect on different social groups?

Fueled by new products and new ways of producing and selling goods, the economy surged in the 1920s. Not everyone benefited, however, and farmers suffered severe economic woes. Still, the overall picture appeared rosy. These economic changes influenced the decade’s political, social, and cultural climate, as Americans confronted a changing society.

Booming Business, Ailing Agriculture

Recession struck in 1920 as Washington canceled wartime defense contracts and veterans reentered the job market.

Recovery came by 1922, however, and for the next few years the nonfarm economy hummed. Unemployment fell to 3 percent, prices held steady, and the gross national product (GNP) grew by 43 percent from 1922 to 1929.

New consumer goods, including electrical products, fed the prosperity. By the mid-1920s, with more than 60 percent of the nation’s homes electrified, new appliances, from refrigerators and vacuum cleaners to fans and razors, filled the stores. The manufacture of such appliances, as well as the construction of hydroelectric generating plants, provided a massive economic stimulus.

The automobile helped fuel the boom. Introduced before the war (see Chapter 21), the automobile came into its own in the 1920s. By 1930, some 60 percent of U.S. families owned cars. The Ford Motor Company led the market until mid-decade, when General Motors (GM) spurted ahead by touting greater comfort and a range of colors. GM’s lowest-priced car, named for French automotive designer Louis Chevrolet, proved especially popular. In 1927, **Henry Ford** introduced the stylish Model A. By the end of the decade, the automobile industry accounted for about 9 percent of all wages in manufacturing and had stimulated such industries as rubber, gasoline and motor oil, advertising, and highway construction.

The business boom reverberated globally. To supply overseas markets, Ford, GM, and other corporations built production facilities abroad. U.S. meatpackers built plants in Argentina, Anaconda Copper acquired Chile’s biggest copper mine, and

Henry Ford Innovator who perfected assembly-line manufacturing techniques and democratized the automobile



“Honey, Where Did You Park the Car?”

Hundreds of identical Fords jam Nantasket Beach near Boston on a Fourth of July in the early 1920s.

the mammoth United Fruit Company established plants across Latin America. But true economic globalization lay far ahead. Economic nationalism prevailed in the 1920s, as the industrialized nations, including the United States, erected high tariff barriers. The Fordney-McCumber Tariff (1922) and the Smoot-Hawley Tariff (1930) pushed U.S. tariffs to all-time highs, helping domestic manufacturers but stifling foreign trade.

While prosperity lifted overall wage rates, workers benefited unequally. The variation between North and South loomed largest. In 1928, unskilled laborers in New England earned an average of forty-seven cents an hour, in contrast to twenty-eight cents in the South. African-Americans, women workers, Mexican-Americans, and recent immigrants clustered at the bottom of the wage scale.

For farmers, wartime prosperity gave way to hard times. Grain prices plummeted when European agriculture revived and America’s high tariffs depressed agricultural exports. As tractors and other new machinery boosted farm production, the resulting surpluses further weakened prices. Farmers who had

bought land and equipment on credit during the war now felt the squeeze as payments came due.

**New Modes of
Producing, Managing,
and Selling**

Productivity increased dramatically in the 1920s. New assembly-line techniques boosted the per capita output of industrial workers by some 40 percent. At the Ford plants near Detroit, workers stood in place and performed repetitive tasks as chains conveyed the partly assembled vehicles past them.

Assembly-line labor did not foster the pride that came from farming or mastering a craft. To keep workers on task, managers discouraged initiative and forbade talking or laughter. As a result, job satisfaction diminished. Nevertheless, “Fordism” became a synonym worldwide for efficient assembly-line methods. In Russia, which purchased twenty-five thousand Ford tractors in the 1920s, people “ascribed a magical quality to the name of Ford,” a visitor reported.

Business consolidation, spurred by the war, continued. By the late 1920s, over a thousand companies a year vanished through merger. Corporate giants dominated the major industries: Ford, GM, and Chrysler in automobiles; General Electric



Chronology

1920	Postwar recession; Warren G. Harding elected president; radio station KDKA, Pittsburgh, broadcasts election returns; Sinclair Lewis, <i>Main Street</i>
1921	Economic boom begins; agriculture remains depressed; Sheppard-Towner Act; <i>Shuffle Along</i> , all-black musical review
1921-1922	Washington Naval Arms Conference
1922	Supreme Court declares child-labor law unconstitutional; Fordney-McCumber Tariff restores high rates
1923	Harding dies; Calvin Coolidge becomes president; Teapot Dome scandals investigated; National Origins Act (immigration restriction)
1924	Calvin Coolidge elected president
1925	Scopes trial; Ku Klux Klan scandal in Indiana; Alain Locke, <i>The New Negro</i> ; DuBose Heyward, <i>Porgy</i> ; F. Scott Fitzgerald, <i>The Great Gatsby</i>
1926	National Broadcasting Company founded; Langston Hughes, <i>The Weary Blues</i>
1927	<i>The Jazz Singer</i> , first sound movie; Coolidge vetoes the McNary-Haugen farm bill; Henry Ford introduces the Model A; Ford apologizes for anti-Semitic publications; execution of Sacco and Vanzetti; Charles A. Lindbergh's transatlantic flight; Marcus Garvey deported; Mississippi River flood
1928	Herbert Hoover elected president
1929	Sheppard-Towner program terminated; Ernest Hemingway, <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> ; Claude McKay, <i>Home to Harlem</i>

and Westinghouse in electricity; and so forth. Samuel Insull presided over a multi-billion-dollar empire of local and regional power companies and electric railroads. By 1930, one hundred corporations controlled nearly half the nation's businesses.

As U.S. capitalism matured, management structures evolved. Corporations set up separate divisions for product development, market research, economic forecasting, and employee relations. The shift to a consumer economy also affected wage policies. Rather than paying the lowest wages possible, business leaders realized that higher wages increased consumers' buying power. Henry Ford led the way in 1914 by paying his workers five dollars a day, well above the average for factory workers. Other companies soon followed suit.

New systems for distributing goods emerged. Automobiles, for example, reached consumers through dealer networks. By 1926, nearly ten thousand Ford dealerships dotted the nation. The A&P grocery chain boasted 17,500 stores by 1928. Chain stores accounted for about a quarter of all retail sales by 1930. Department stores grew more inviting, with remodeled interiors and attractive display windows. Air conditioning, a recent invention, made department stores (as well as movie theaters and restaurants) welcome havens on summer days.

Advertising and credit sales further stimulated the consumer economy. In 1929, corporations spent nearly \$2 billion on radio, billboard, newspaper, and magazine ads, and advertising companies employed some six hundred thousand people. Advertisers used celebrity endorsements, promises of social success, and threats of social embarrassment. Beneath a picture of a sad young woman, a Listerine mouthwash ad suggested that young women failed to find husbands because of "halitosis," or bad breath. The remedy, of course, was Listerine, and lots of it.

Portraying a fantasy world of elegance, pleasure, and limitless abundance, ads aroused desires that the advertisers promised to fulfill. One critic in 1925 described the advertisers' "dream world":

[S]hining teeth, schoolgirl complexions, cornless feet, perfect fitting [underwear], distinguished collars, wrinkleless pants, odorless breath, regularized bowels, . . . charging motors, punctureless tires, perfect busts, shimmering shanks, self-washing dishes, backs behind which the moon was meant to rise.

The advertisers defined America's essential meaning in terms of its abundance of material goods and consumers' "freedom of choice" in the marketplace. Buying more and more products, they claimed, fulfilled the "pursuit of happiness" promised in the Declaration of Independence, and was thus the duty of all good citizens. However, consumer freedom came at a price. Americans of the 1920s increasingly bought major purchases on credit. By 1929, credit purchases accounted for 75 percent of automobile sales.

Business values saturated 1920s' culture. "America stands for one idea: Business . . .," proclaimed the *Independent* magazine in 1921; "Thru business, . . . the human race is finally to be redeemed." Presidents Harding and Coolidge praised business values and hobnobbed with corporate leaders. A 1923 opinion poll ranked Henry Ford as a leading presidential prospect. In *The Man Nobody Knows* (1925), ad man Bruce Barton described Jesus Christ as a managerial genius who "picked up twelve men from the bottom ranks of business and forged them into an organization that conquered the world."

Women in the New Economic Era

Although more women worked outside the home in the 1920s, their proportion of the total female population held steady at about 24 percent. Male workers dominated the auto plants and other assembly-line factories. Women who did enter the workplace faced wage discrimination. In 1929, for example, a male trimmer in the meatpacking industry received fifty-two cents an hour; a female trimmer, thirty-seven cents.

Most women workers held low-paying, unskilled positions. By 1930, however, some 2 million women were working in corporate offices as secretaries, typists, or filing clerks, although rarely at higher ranks.

Nearly fifty thousand women received college degrees in 1930, almost triple the 1920 figure. Of those who entered the workplace, most took clerical jobs or entered such traditional "women's professions" as nursing, librarianship, and school teaching. With medical schools limiting the number of women students to 5 percent, the number of women physicians actually declined from 1910 to 1930. A handful of women, however, following the lead of Progressive Era feminist trailblazers, pursued postgraduate education to become faculty members in colleges and universities.

Marginalized in the workplace, women were courted as consumers. In the decade's advertising, glamorous women smiled behind the steering wheel, swooned over new appliances, and smoked cigarettes in romantic settings. (One ad man promoted cigarettes for women as "torches of freedom.") In the advertisers' dream world, housework became an exciting challenge. As one ad put it, "Men are judged . . . according to their power to delegate work. Similarly the wise woman delegates to electricity all that electricity can do."

Struggling Labor Unions in a Business Age

Organized labor faced tough sledding in the 1920s. Union membership fell from 5 million in 1920 to 3.4 million in 1929. Several factors underlay this decline. For one thing, despite inequities and regional variations, overall wage rates rose in the decade, reducing the incentive to join a union. Further, the union movement's strength lay in older industries like printing, railroading, mining, and construction. These unions were ill suited to the new mass-production factories.

Management hostility further weakened organized labor. Henry Ford hired thugs to intimidate union organizers. In 1929, anti-union violence flared in North Carolina, where textile workers faced low wages, long hours, and appalling work conditions. In Marion, deputy sheriffs shot and killed six striking workers. In Gastonia, a sniper shot and killed strike leader and balladeer Ella May Wiggins en route to a union rally. In the end, these strikes failed, and the textile industry remained nonunion.

As the wartime antiradical mood continued, opponents of labor unions often smeared them with the "communist" label, whether accurate or not. The anti-union campaign took subtler forms as well. Manufacturers' associations renamed the nonunion shop the "open shop" and dubbed it the "American Plan" of labor relations. Some corporations provided cafeterias and recreational facilities for employees. Corporate publicists praised "welfare capitalism" (the term for this anti-union strategy) as evidence of employers' benevolent concern for their workers.

Black membership in labor unions stood at only about eighty-two thousand by 1929, mostly consisting of miners, dockworkers, and railroad porters. The American Federation of Labor officially prohibited racial discrimination, but most AFL unions in fact barred African-Americans. Corporations often hired jobless blacks as strikebreakers, increasing organized labor's hostility toward them.

CHECKING IN

- Automobiles were at the root of the economic boom in the 1920s; farmers were left out.
- Mass production and the assembly line came of age.
- Advertising played a major role in stimulating consumption.
- More women graduated from college and entered the office work force, but few were in high-wage industrial jobs.
- Labor unions struggled, in part because of general prosperity, and in part because of management measures to undermine them.

STANDPAT POLITICS IN A DECADE OF CHANGE

What political and social ideas shaped the administrations of Presidents Harding and Coolidge?

Politics in the 1920s reflected the decade's business orientation. Unsettled by rapid social change, voters turned to conservative candidates who seemed to represent stability and traditional values. In this climate, former progressives, would-be reformers, and exploited groups had few political options.

The Evolving Presidency: Scandals and Public-Relations Manipulation

While white southerners and urban immigrants remained heavily Democratic, the Republican Party continued to attract northern farmers, businesspeople, native-born white-collar workers and professionals, and some skilled blue-collar workers. The GOP also benefited from the antiradical mood that fueled the early postwar Red Scare (see Chapter 22) and the anti-union campaign.

With Republican progressives having bolted to Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, GOP conservatives controlled the 1920 convention and nominated Ohio senator Warren G. Harding for president. A genial backslapper, Harding enjoyed good liquor, a good poker game, and at least one long-term extramarital affair. In the election, Harding swamped his Democratic opponent James M. Cox. Harding made some notable cabinet selections: Charles Evans Hughes, former New York governor and 1916 presidential candidate, for secretary of state; Andrew Mellon, a Pittsburgh financier, for treasury secretary; and Herbert Hoover, the wartime food tsar, for secretary of commerce.

Harding also made some disastrous appointments, including a wartime draft dodger, Charles Forbes, as Veterans' Bureau head. Such men set the low ethical tone of Harding's presidency. By 1922, the Washington rumor mill hinted at corruption in high places. "I have no trouble with my enemies . . .," Harding told an associate; "[b]ut . . . my goddamn friends . . . keep me walking the floor nights." In summer 1923, while vacationing in the West, Harding suffered a heart attack and died in a San Francisco hotel.

In 1924, a Senate investigation exposed the scandals. Charles Forbes, convicted of stealing Veterans' Bureau funds, evaded prison by fleeing abroad. The bureau's general counsel committed suicide, as did an aide to Attorney General Daugherty who was accused of influence peddling. Daugherty himself narrowly escaped conviction in two criminal trials. Interior Secretary Fall went to jail for leasing government oil reserves, including one in Teapot Dome, Wyoming, to oilmen in return for a \$400,000 bribe. Like "Watergate" in the 1970s, "**Teapot Dome**" became a shorthand label for a tangle of scandals.

With Harding's death, Vice President **Calvin Coolidge**, on vacation in Vermont, took the presidential oath by lantern light from his father, a local magistrate. Elected Massachusetts governor in 1918, he secured the Republican vice-presidential nomination in 1920. Coolidge's image as "Silent Cal," a prim Yankee embodiment of old-fashioned virtues, was carefully crafted. The advertising executive Bruce Barton guided Coolidge's bid for national office in 1919–1920. Barton planted pro-Coolidge articles in magazines and in other ways marketed his candidate just as advertisers were marketing soap, socks, and cereal. Wrote an admirer of Barton: "No man is his equal in [analyzing] the middle-class mind and directing an appeal to it."

Republican Policy Making in a Probusiness Era

While Coolidge raised the ethical tone of the White House, the probusiness policies, symbolized by high tariffs, continued. Congress lowered income-tax rates for the wealthy from their high wartime levels and the Supreme Court overturned several progressive measures. In 1927, torrential spring rains caused severe flooding on the Mississippi River; hundreds died and hundreds of thousands more lost their homes. But Coolidge rejected a request for aid from flood victims with the reminder that government had no duty to protect citizens "against the hazards of the elements."

Another test of Coolidge's views came when hard-pressed farmers rallied behind the **McNary-Haugen Bill**, a price-support plan under which the government would annually purchase the surplus of basic farm commodities. Coolidge twice vetoed

Teapot Dome Scandal of the Harding administration

Calvin Coolidge Former Massachusetts governor; soft-spoken, dour successor to Warren Harding

McNary-Haugen Bill Popular legislation to help farmers, vetoed by Coolidge

the McNary-Haugen Bill, in 1927 and 1928, warning of “the tyranny of bureaucratic regulation and control.” These vetoes led many angry farmers to vote Democratic in 1928. In the 1930s, New Deal planners would draw upon the McNary-Haugen approach in shaping farm policy (as discussed in Chapter 24).

Independent Internationalism

Despite its refusal to join the League of Nations or the new World Court, the United States remained a world power. Republican presidents pursued what they saw as the national interest—an approach historians have called independent internationalism. Despite postwar Europe’s battered economies, Washington demanded repayment of \$22 billion in Allied war debts and German reparation payments. In addition, the Republican administrations worked to protect U.S. corporate interests in Mexico and Nicaragua, where President Coolidge in 1926 sent U.S. Marines to put down an insurrection against the country’s president, Adolfo Diáz, who had close ties to a U.S.-owned gold-mining company.



Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

The 1927 Mississippi River Flood

A few of the 700,000 people displaced by the raging waters of the Mississippi await rescue, their partially submerged homes in the background. President Calvin Coolidge resisted calls for federal aid, insisting that the government had no obligation to help citizens suffering from “the hazards of the elements.”

Washington Naval Arms

Conference Attempt to limit weapons and arms spending among major nations

One notable diplomatic achievement was the **Washington Naval Arms Conference**. After the war ended, the United States, Great Britain, and Japan edged toward a dangerous (and costly) naval-arms race. In 1921, Secretary of State Hughes called for a conference in Washington and outlined a specific ratio of warships among the world's naval powers. Great Britain and Japan, together with Italy and France, accepted Hughes's plan and agreed to halt all battleship construction for ten years. Although this treaty ultimately failed to prevent war, it did represent an early arms-control effort.

Another U.S. peace initiative was mainly symbolic. In 1928, the United States and France, eventually joined by sixty other nations, signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact renouncing aggression and calling for the outlawing of war. Lacking enforcement mechanisms, this high-sounding document accomplished little.

**Progressive Stirrings,
Democratic Party
Divisions**

The reform spirit survived in Congress. The Sheppard-Towner Act (1921) funded rural prenatal and baby-care centers staffed by public-health nurses. In 1927, Congress created the Federal Radio Commission, extending the regulatory principle to this new industry. In the 1922 midterm election, labor and farm groups joined forces to defeat some conservative Republicans. In 1924, this alliance revived the Progressive Party and nominated Senator Robert La Follette—who also received the endorsement of the Socialist Party—for president.

The 1924 Democratic convention in New York City split between urban and rural wings. By one vote, the delegates defeated a resolution condemning the **Ku Klux Klan**. While the party's Protestant southern wing favored former Treasury Secretary William G. McAdoo, the big-city delegates rallied behind New York's Catholic governor **Alfred E. Smith**. The Democratic split mirrored deep divisions in the nation. After 102 ballots, the exhausted delegates nominated an obscure New York corporation lawyer, John W. Davis.

Calvin Coolidge, aided by his media adviser Bruce Barton, easily won the Republican nomination. The GOP platform praised the high protective tariff and urged tax cuts and reduced government spending. Coolidge received nearly 16 million votes, about twice Davis's total. La Follette's 4.8 million votes cut into the Democratic total, contributing to the Coolidge landslide.

**Women and Politics
in the 1920s:
Achievements
and Setbacks**

Reformers' hope that woman suffrage would transform politics survived briefly after the war. Polling places shifted from saloons to schools and churches. The 1920 major party platforms endorsed several measures proposed by the League of Women Voters. The Women's Joint Congressional Committee, a coalition of activist groups, backed the **Sheppard-Towner Act** and called for a constitutional amendment to ban child labor in 1924.

As former suffrage advocates scattered across the political spectrum, however, the women's movement lost focus. The League of Women Voters, drawing middle-class and professional women, abandoned feminist activism and instead conducted non-partisan studies of civic issues. Alice Paul's National Woman's Party proposed a constitutional amendment guaranteeing women equal rights, but other reformers argued

Ku Klux Klan

Anti-modern reactionary group; wielded substantial political power in the 1920s

Alfred E. Smith

Former Tammany Hall machine politician; Democratic nominee for president in 1928

Sheppard-Towner Act

Appropriated \$1.2 million for rural prenatal and baby-care centers in 1921

it jeopardized laws protecting women workers. The proposed amendment got nowhere. Politically active African-American women battled racial discrimination rather than addressing feminist issues; Hispanic women in the Southwest put their energies into labor-union organizing.

The reactionary political climate intensified this retreat from feminism. Patriotic groups accused Jane Addams and other women's-rights leaders of communist sympathies. Younger women, bombarded by ads that defined liberation in terms of consumption, rejected the prewar feminists' civic idealism.

The reforms backed by women's groups proved short-lived. The Supreme Court struck down child-labor and women's-protective laws. The 1924 constitutional amendment banning child labor passed Congress, but few states ratified it. The Sheppard-Towner Act, denounced by the American Medical Association as a threat to physicians' monopoly of health care, expired in 1929.

CHECKING IN

- Corruption damaged the Harding administration.
- The Coolidge administration remained staunchly probusiness.
- The United States remained fundamentally isolationist but pursued its national interest through "independent internationalism."
- The Democratic Party split between its urban and rural wings, and lost badly in 1924.
- Woman suffrage produced few changes as women splintered across the political spectrum.

MASS SOCIETY, MASS CULTURE

What developments underlay 1920s' mass culture, and how did they affect American life and leisure?

Amid this conservative political climate, major transformations were reshaping society. Assembly lines, advertising, new consumer products, and innovations in mass entertainment and corporate organization all fueled the ferment. While some welcomed these changes, others recoiled in fear.

Cities, Cars, and Consumer Goods

In the 1920 census, the urban population (defined as persons living in communities of twenty-five hundred or more) surpassed the rural (see Figure 23.1). The United

States had become an urban nation.

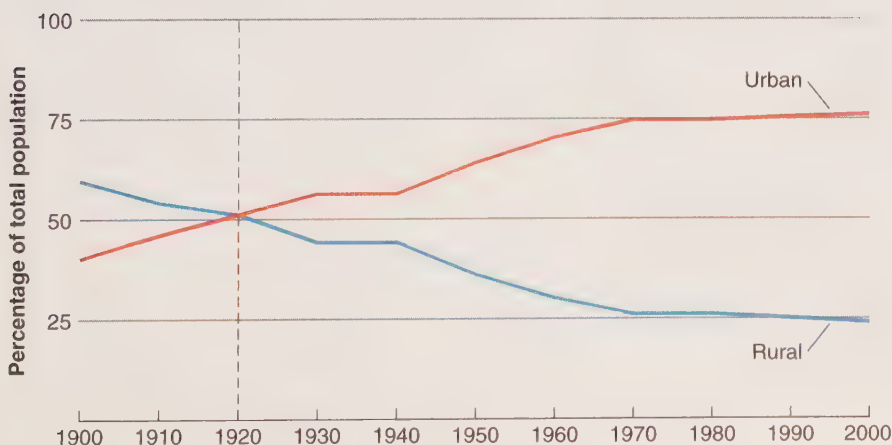


Figure 23.1 The Urban and Rural Population of the United States, 1900–2000

The urbanization of America in the twentieth century had profound political, economic, and social consequences.

Source: Census Bureau, Historical Statistics of the United States, updated by relevant Statistical Abstracts of the United States.

Urbanization affected different groups in different ways. African-Americans migrated cityward in massive numbers, especially after the 1927 Mississippi River floods. By 1930, more than 40 percent of the nation's 12 million blacks lived in cities. The first black congressman since Reconstruction, Oscar De Priest of Chicago, won election in 1928.

For many women, city life meant eased housework thanks to laborsaving appliances. Store-bought clothes replaced hand-sewn apparel. Home baking and canning declined as commercial bakeries arose and supermarkets proliferated. For social impact, however, nothing matched the automobile. In *Middletown* (1929), a study of Muncie, Indiana, Robert and Helen Lynd reported one resident's comment: "Why . . . do you need to study what's changing this country? I can tell you . . . in just four letters: A-U-T-O."

The A-U-T-O's social impact was decidedly mixed, as its convenience was tempered by traffic jams, parking problems, and highway fatalities (more than twenty-six thousand in 1924). In some ways, the automobile brought families together. As family vacations became more common, tourist cabins and roadside restaurants sprang up. But the automobile also eroded family cohesion and parental authority. Young people could borrow the car to go to the movies, attend a distant dance, or simply park in a secluded lovers' lane.

Middle- and upper-class women welcomed the automobile. They could now drive to work, attend meetings, visit friends, and gain a sense of independence. Stereotypes of feminine delicacy faded as women mastered this new technology. As the editor of an automotive magazine wrote in 1927, "[E]very time a woman learns to drive, . . . it is a threat to yesterday's order of things."

Automobiles offered farm families easier access to neighbors and to the city, lessening rural isolation. The automobile's country cousin, the tractor, proved instantly popular, with nearly a million in use in America by 1930. Yet increased productivity did not always mean increased profits. And as farmers bought tractors on credit, the rural debt crisis worsened.

Ads celebrated the freedom the automobile offered, in contrast to the fixed routes and schedules of trains and streetcars. Yet the automobile and other forms of motor transport in many ways further standardized American life. Buses carried children to consolidated schools. Neighborhood grocery stores declined as people drove to supermarkets served by trucks bringing commercial foods from distant facilities. With the automobile came the first suburban shopping center (in Kansas City), and the first fast-food chain (A&W Root Beer).

Even at \$300 or \$400, the automobile remained too expensive for many. The "automobile suburbs" that sprang up beyond the streetcar lines attracted mainly the well-to-do, widening class divisions in American society.

Soaring Energy Consumption and a Threatened Environment

Electrification and the spread of motorized vehicles impacted the nation's natural resources and the environment. As electrical use soared, power-generating plants consumed growing quantities of coal. In 1929, U.S. refineries used over a billion barrels of petroleum to meet the gasoline and oil demands of the nation's 20 million cars.

Rising gasoline consumption underlay Washington's efforts to ensure U.S. access to Mexican oil and triggered fevered activity in the oilfields of Texas and Oklahoma. In short, heavy fossil-fuel consumption, though small by later standards, already characterized America in the 1920s.

The wilderness that had inspired nineteenth-century artists and writers became more accessible as cars and improved roads gave vacationers easier access to the national parks and once-pristine regions. This development, too, had mixed effects. On one hand, it created a broader constituency for wilderness preservation. On the other hand, it subjected the nation's wilderness areas to heavy pressures as visitors expected good highways, service stations, restaurants, and hotels.

The Sierra Club and other groups worked to protect wilderness and wildlife. In 1923, a group of recreational fishermen persuaded Congress to halt a private-development scheme to drain a vast stretch of wetlands on the upper Mississippi. Instead, Congress declared this beautiful waterway a wildlife preserve. Aldo Leopold of the U.S. Forest Service warned of technology run amok. For too long, Leopold wrote in 1925, "a stump was our symbol of progress." However, few Americans in the expansive 1920s worried about the environmental issues that would occupy future generations.

Mass-Produced Entertainment

Prosperity and workplace drudgery stimulated leisure activities in the 1920s. In their free hours, Americans sought the fulfillment their jobs often failed to provide.

Mass-circulation magazines proliferated. By 1922, ten U.S. magazines boasted circulation of more than 2.5 million. The venerable *Saturday Evening Post*, with its Norman Rockwell covers, specialized in nostalgia. *Reader's Digest*, founded in 1921, offered condensed versions of articles first published elsewhere. A journalistic equivalent of the Model T, the *Digest* offered standardized fare for mass consumption.

Book publishers broadened their market by selling through department stores or directly to the public via the Book-of-the-Month Club, launched in 1926. While critics accused such mass-market ventures of debasing literary taste, they did help sustain a common national culture in an increasingly diverse society.

Radio and the movies similarly offered standardized cultural fare. The radio era began on November 2, 1920, when Pittsburgh station KDKA reported Warren Harding's election. In 1922, five hundred new stations began operations, as radio fever gripped America. The first



The Romance of the Movies

The 1927 film *Wings*, starring twenty-two-year-old Clara Bow, told of two World War I flying aces in love with the same young woman. It won the first Academy Award for best picture.

radio network, the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), formed four years later; the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) followed in 1927. Testing popular taste through market research, the networks soon ruled broadcasting. Americans everywhere laughed at the same jokes, heard the same news, and absorbed the same commercials.

Some commentators advocated preserving radio as a public educational and cultural medium, free of advertising, but commercial sponsorship soon won out. The first network comedy show, *Amos 'n' Andy* (1928)—which included stereotyped caricatures of African-American life—enriched its sponsor, Pepsodent toothpaste.

Featuring stars like Valentino, the movies expanded from the nickelodeons of the immigrant wards into elegant uptown pleasure palaces with names like Majestic, Ritz, and Orpheum. In 1922, facing protests about sexually suggestive movies, industry moguls named Postmaster General Will Hays, a former head of the Republican National Committee, to police movie morals. Despite charges of immorality, movies often reinforced conservative values. For example, *The Ten Commandments* (1923), directed by Cecil B. De Mille (the son of an Episcopal clergyman), cautioned against breaking moral taboos.

Technical innovations kept moviegoers coming. Al Jolson's *The Jazz Singer* (1927) introduced sound. Walt Disney's cartoon *Steamboat Willy* (1928) not only introduced Mickey Mouse but also showed the potential of animation. Like advertising, the movies created a dream world only loosely tethered to reality. One ad promised "all the adventure, . . . romance, . . . [and] excitement you lack in your daily life." The movies also stimulated consumption with alluring images of the good life. Along with department stores, mass magazines, and advertising, they opened new vistas of consumer abundance.

For all its influence, the new mass culture penetrated society unevenly. It had less impact in rural America, and met resistance among evangelical Christians suspicious of worldly amusements. Mexican-Americans generally preferred traditional festivals and leisure activities. Local radio stations broadcast not only network shows, but also farm reports, local news, religious programs, community announcements, and ethnic or regional music. In short, despite the new mass culture, America still had room for diversity in the 1920s.

Celebrity Culture

Professional sports and media-promoted spectacles provided diversion as well. In 1921, Atlantic City promoters launched a bathing-beauty contest they grandly called the Miss America Pageant. Celebrities dominated professional sports. Few Americans were more famous than Babe Ruth of the New York Yankees or Ty Cobb, the Detroit Tigers' player/manager. Ruth was a heavy-drinking womanizer; Cobb, a foul-tempered racist. Yet the alchemy of publicity transformed them into heroes with contrived nicknames: "the Sultan of Swat" (Ruth) and "the Georgia Peach" (Cobb).

This celebrity culture illuminates the stresses facing ordinary Americans in these years of social change. For young women uncertain about society's shifting expectations, the beauty pageants offered one ideal to which they could aspire. For men grappling with unsettling developments from feminism to Fordism, the exploits of sports heroes like Ruth could help restore damaged self-esteem.

Celebrity worship crested in the response to **Charles Lindbergh**, a daredevil stunt pilot who flew solo across the Atlantic in his small single-engine plane, *The Spirit of St. Louis*, on May 20–21, 1927. His success gripped the public's imagination. In New York, thousands turned out for a ticker-tape parade. Radio, newspapers, magazines, and movie newsreels offered saturation coverage. An instant celebrity, Lindbergh became a blank screen onto which people projected their hopes, fears, and ideologies. President Coolidge praised the flight as a triumph of American business and corporate technology. Others saw Lindbergh as proof that despite mechanization, the individual still counted. To conservatives, Lindbergh's solid virtues proved that the old verities survived.

Overall, the new mass media had mixed social effects. Certainly, they promoted cultural standardization and uniformity of thought. But mass magazines, radio, and movies also introduced new viewpoints and ways of behaving. Implicitly, they conveyed a potent message: A person's immediate surroundings need not limit his or her horizons. If the larger world they opened for ordinary Americans was often superficial or tawdry, it could also be exciting and liberating.

Charles Lindbergh

Celebrity hero; first to fly solo across the Atlantic

CHECKING IN

- The automobile had a major impact in every sector of American life.
- Energy consumption soared, with little concern about environmental impact.
- The development of radio networks, large-circulation magazines, and national movie distribution created a shared mass culture.
- The 1920s were the first decade in which celebrity culture flourished; Babe Ruth and Charles Lindbergh were two noted celebrities of the time.
- Professional sports and athletes became highly popular.

CULTURAL FERMENT AND CREATIVITY

What social developments contributed to the cultural creativity of the 1920s?

American life in the 1920s involved more than politics, assembly lines, and celebrity worship. As writers, artists, and musicians contributed to the modernist spirit of cultural innovation, African-Americans created a cultural flowering known as the Harlem Renaissance.

The Jazz Age and the Postwar Crisis of Values

The war and its sour aftermath sharpened the cultural restlessness already bubbling in prewar America. The postwar crisis of values took many forms. Some young people—especially affluent college students—boisterously assailed middle-class standards of behavior. Seizing the freedom offered by the automobile, they threw parties, drank bootleg liquor, flocked to jazz clubs, and danced the Charleston. Young people also discussed sex more freely than their elders had. Sigmund Freud, the Viennese physician who explored the sexual aspects of human psychology, enjoyed a popular vogue in the 1920s.

Despite much talk about sex and charges of rampant immorality, however, the 1920s' "sexual revolution" was a hard concept to pin down. Premarital intercourse remained an exceptional occurrence and most people widely disapproved of the practice. What *was* documented were changing courtship patterns. "Courting" had once been a formal prelude to marriage. The 1920s brought the more casual practice of "dating," through which young people gained social confidence and a degree of sexual experience without necessarily contemplating marriage.

For women, these postwar changes in some ways proved liberating. Female sexuality was more openly acknowledged. Skirt lengths crept up, makeup became more acceptable, and the elaborate armor of petticoats and corsets fell away. The awesome matronly bosom mysteriously deflated as a more boyish figure became the fashion ideal. The so-called flapper, with her bobbed hair, defiant cigarette, lipstick, and short skirt, similarly epitomized youthful rejection of entrenched stereotypes.

But this image also objectified young women as decorative sexual objects. Further, the double standard, which held women to a stricter code of conduct, remained in force. Young men could boast of sexual exploits, but young women reputed to be “fast” risked damaged reputations. In some ways, 1920s’ popular culture worked against full gender equality nearly as effectively as had the older Victorian stereotypes.

Around 1922, according to F. Scott Fitzgerald, adults embraced the rebelliousness of the young and “the orgy began.” But such sweeping generalizations can mislead. During the years of Fitzgerald’s alleged national orgy, the divorce rate remained constant, and many Americans adhered to traditional standards, rejecting alcohol and wild parties. Many farmers, industrial workers, blacks, Hispanics, and recent immigrants found economic concerns more pressing than the latest fads and fashions.

The “Jazz Age” was partially a media and literary creation. Fitzgerald’s romanticized novel about affluent postwar youth, *This Side of Paradise* (1920), spawned many imitators. But if the Jazz Age stereotype obscured the complexity of the 1920s, it did capture a part of the postwar scene, especially the brassy new mass culture and the hedonism and materialism of the well-to-do as they basked in the era’s prosperity.

Alienated Writers

Like Fitzgerald, many young writers found the decade’s cultural turbulence energizing. Rejecting the old order’s moralistic pieties, they also disliked the business pieties of the new order. In *Main Street* (1920), the novelist Sinclair Lewis satirized the smugness and cultural barrenness of Gopher Prairie, a fictional midwestern town based on his native Sauk Centre, Minnesota. In *Babbitt* (1922), Lewis skewered a mythic larger city, Zenith, and the title character George F. Babbitt, a real-estate agent trapped in middle-class conformity.

H. L. Mencken, a journalist, editor, and critic, in 1924 launched the iconoclastic *American Mercury* magazine, which was an instant success with the decade’s alienated intellectuals and young people. Mencken championed writers like Lewis and Theodore Dreiser while ridiculing politicians, small-town America, Protestant fundamentalism, and the middle-class “Booboisie.” Asked why he stayed in America, Mencken replied, “Why do people visit zoos?”

For the novelist Ernest Hemingway, who was seriously wounded in 1918 while serving as a Red Cross volunteer in northern Italy, World War I was a watershed experience. In 1926 Hemingway, now an expatriate in Paris, published *The Sun Also Rises*, portraying a group of American and British young people, variously damaged by the war, as they drift around Spain. His *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), loosely based on his own experiences, depicted the war’s futility and politicians’ empty rhetoric.

Although writers like Hemingway and Lewis blasted wartime hypocrisy and postwar vulgarity, they remained American at heart, striving to create a more authentic

H. L. Mencken Master of satire; journalist who pilloried narrow-minded thinking

national culture. Even Fitzgerald, himself caught up in Jazz Age excesses, was fundamentally a moralist. His masterpiece, *The Great Gatsby* (1925), portrayed not only the party-filled lives of the decade's moneyed class, but also their superficiality, selfishness, and heedless disregard for the less fortunate.

Architects, Painters, and Musicians Celebrate Modern America

A burst of architectural activity transformed the urban skyline in the 1920s. By 1930, New York City boasted four buildings that were more than fifty stories tall. Work on the 102-story Empire State Building, long the world's tallest building, began that year.

The decade's leading painters took America—real or imagined—as their subject. While Thomas Hart Benton evoked a past of cowboys, pioneers, and riverboat gamblers, Edward Hopper portrayed faded towns and lonely cities of the present. Hopper's painting *Sunday* (1926), picturing a man slumped on the curb of an empty street of abandoned stores, conveyed both the bleakness and potential beauty of urban America. A similar fascination with the industrial city pervaded the work of artists Joseph Stella and Charles Sheeler. Wisconsin's Georgia O'Keeffe, who moved to New York City in 1918, evoked the allure of the metropolis in her paintings of the later 1920s.

The creative ferment of the 1920s inspired composers as well. Of all the musical innovations, jazz best captured the modernist spirit. The white bandleader Paul Whiteman offered watered-down “jazz” versions of standard tunes, and white composers embraced jazz as well. Aaron Copland's *Music for Theatre* (1925) and George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) and *An American in Paris* (1928) revealed strong jazz influences.

Meanwhile, black musicians preserved authentic jazz and explored its potential. The 1920s recordings of trumpeter Louis Armstrong decisively influenced the future of jazz. The composer and bandleader Duke Ellington performed to mesmerized audiences at Harlem's Cotton Club. Meanwhile, the piano's jazz potential was demonstrated by Fats Waller and Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton. Although much of 1920s' popular culture faded quickly, jazz endured.

The Harlem Renaissance

Jazz was only one of many black contributions to 1920s' American culture. The social changes of these years energized African-American cultural life, especially in New York City's Harlem. An elite white suburb before World War I, Harlem attracted many African-Americans during and after the war, and by 1930 most of New York's 327,000 blacks lived within its boundaries. This concentration, plus the proximity of Broadway theaters, record companies, book publishers, and the NAACP's national headquarters, all contributed to the Harlem Renaissance.

This cultural flowering took varied forms. The Mississippi-born black composer William Grant Still, moving to Harlem in 1922, produced many works, including *Afro American Symphony* (1931). The painter Aaron Douglas and the sculptor Augusta Savage worked in the visual arts. The multitalented Paul Robeson gave vocal concerts, made films, and appeared on Broadway in Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* and other plays.

Poet Langston Hughes incorporated African themes and southern black traditions in *The Weary Blues* (1926), and the Jamaican-born poet and novelist Claude McKay evoked Harlem's vibrant, sometimes sinister nightlife in *Home to Harlem* (1928). Nella Larsen, from the Danish West Indies, told of a mulatto woman's struggle with her mixed ethnicity in the 1928 novel *Quicksand*. In *The New Negro* (1925), Alain Locke, a philosophy professor at Howard University, assembled essays, poems, short stories, and reproductions of artworks to convey Harlem's rich cultural life.

The white cultural establishment took notice. Book publishers and magazine editors courted black writers. Broadway producers mounted black shows. Whites crowded Harlem's jazz clubs. DuBose Heyward's 1925 novel *Porgy* offered a sympathetic picture of Charleston's African-American community. George Gershwin's musical version, *Porgy and Bess*, premiered in 1935.

CHECKING IN

- The Jazz Age, symbolized by the bold behavior of “flaming youth” and the flamboyant sexuality of flappers, shocked traditionalists.
- Appalled by World War I, alienated writers criticized American society; many fled to Paris and elsewhere abroad.
- Architects and artists created a national visual culture; jazz, with its frenetic rhythms and sexual overtones, dominated the era's music among whites as well as blacks.
- The Harlem Renaissance was primarily a literary movement that ignored politics and racism.

The Harlem Renaissance reached beyond America's borders. For example, jazz won fans in Europe. Langston Hughes and Claude McKay found readers in Africa, Latin America, and Europe. The dancer and singer Josephine Baker, after debuting in Harlem, moved to Paris in 1925, where her highly erotic performances created a sensation.

With white support came misunderstanding and attempts at control. Rebellious young whites romanticized Harlem nightlife, idealizing the spiritual or “primitive” qualities of black culture while ignoring the community's social problems. Nor did it bother them that the popular Cotton Club, controlled by gangsters, featured black performers but barred most blacks from the audience. When Langston Hughes's poems confronted the gritty realities of black life in America, his wealthy white patron angrily withdrew her support.

The exuberance of the Harlem Renaissance faded as hard times hit in the 1930s. Nevertheless, it stands as a memorable cultural achievement. Future black writers, artists, musicians, and performers would owe a great debt to their predecessors of the 1920s.

A SOCIETY IN CONFLICT

What events or movements revealed the major social and cultural conflicts of the 1920s?

The social changes of the 1920s produced a fierce backlash. While Congress restricted immigration, highly publicized court cases in Massachusetts and Tennessee underscored the nation's social and cultural divisions. Millions of whites embraced the racist bigotry and moralistic rhetoric of a revived Ku Klux Klan, and many newly urbanized African-Americans rallied to Marcus Garvey, a magnetic black leader with a riveting message of racial pride. Prohibition stirred further controversy in this conflict-ridden decade.

Immigration Restriction

Fed by wartime efforts to enforce patriotism, the old impulse to remake America into a nation of like-minded, culturally homogeneous people revived in the 1920s.

The **National Origins Act** of 1924, a revision of the immigration law, restricted annual immigration from any foreign country to 2 percent of the number of persons of that “national origin” in the United States in 1890. Since the great influx of southern and eastern Europeans had come later, this provision clearly aimed to reduce immigration from these regions. As Calvin Coolidge observed on signing the law, “America must be kept American.”

This quota system, which survived to 1965, represented a strong counterattack by native-born Protestant America against the immigrant cities. Total immigration fell from 1.2 million in 1914 to 280,000 in 1929. The law excluded Asians and South Asians entirely. Court rulings underscored the nativist message. In *Ozawa v. United States* (1922), the U.S. Supreme Court denied citizenship to a Japanese-born university student. In 1923, the Supreme Court upheld a California law limiting Japanese immigrants’ rights to own or lease farmland.

Needed Workers/ Unwelcome Aliens: Hispanic Newcomers

Although extremely restrictive otherwise, the 1924 law did not limit immigration from the Western Hemisphere. Accordingly, immigration from Latin America (as well as from French Canada) soared. Poverty and political turmoil propelled thousands of Mexicans northward. By 1930, at least 2 million Mexican-born immigrants lived in the United States, mostly in the Southwest. California’s Mexican-American population surged from 90,000 to nearly 360,000 in the 1920s.

Many of these newcomers became migratory workers in large-scale agribusiness. Mexican labor sustained California’s citrus industry. Cooperatives like the Southern California Fruit Growers Exchange (Sunkist) hired workers on a seasonal basis, provided substandard housing in isolated settlements, and fought the migrants’ attempts to form labor unions.

Not all Mexican immigrants were migratory workers, however; many settled into U.S. communities. Although still emotionally linked to “México Lindo” (“Beautiful Mexico”), they formed local support networks and cultural institutions. However, Mexican-Americans found little support from the U.S. Catholic church. Earlier Catholic immigrants had attended ethnic parishes and worshipped in their own languages, but by the 1920s church policy had changed. In “Anglo” parishes with non-Hispanic priests, the Spanish-speaking newcomers faced discrimination and pressure to abandon their language and traditions.

In the larger society, Mexican immigrants faced ambivalent attitudes. Their labor was needed, but their presence angered nativists eager to preserve a “white” and Protestant nation. Would-be Mexican immigrants faced strict literacy and financial tests, and in 1929 Congress made it a criminal offense to cross the border without following required immigration procedures. Nevertheless, an estimated one hundred thousand illegal Mexican newcomers arrived annually to fill pressing demands in the U.S. labor market.

Nativism, Antiradicalism, and the Sacco-Vanzetti Case

The immigration-restriction movement reflected deep strains of ethnic, racial, and religious prejudice in 1920s’ America. Anti-Semitic propaganda filled Henry Ford’s weekly newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, which was

National Origins Act

Limitation of immigrants to keep out the “wrong sort”

distributed through Ford dealerships and mailed free to schools and libraries. Sued for defamation by a Jewish attorney, Ford in 1927 issued an evasive apology blaming subordinates.

Nativist, antiradical prejudices pervaded the Sacco-Vanzetti case, a Massachusetts murder case that began in April 1920, when robbers shot and killed the paymaster and guard of a shoe factory in South Braintree, Massachusetts. In 1921, a jury found two Italian immigrants, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, guilty of the crime. After many appeals and a review by a commission of notable citizens, they were electrocuted on August 23, 1927.

Sacco and Vanzetti Anarchists accused and convicted of murder

These bare facts hardly convey the passions the case aroused. **Sacco and Vanzetti** were anarchists, and the prosecution harped on their radicalism. The judge barely concealed his hostility to the pair, whom he privately called “those anarchist bastards.” While many conservatives supported the death sentence, liberals and socialists rallied to their cause.

Later research on Boston’s anarchist community and ballistics tests on Sacco’s gun pointed to their guilt. But the prejudices that tainted the trial remain indisputable, as does the case’s symbolic importance in exposing the deep fault lines in 1920s’ American society.

Fundamentalism and the Scopes Trial

Meanwhile, an equally celebrated case in Tennessee highlighted another front in the cultural wars of the 1920s: the growing prestige of science. While many Americans welcomed the advance of science, some religious believers found it threatening. Their fears deepened as scholars subjected the Bible to critical scrutiny, psychologists and sociologists studied supernatural belief systems as human social constructs and expressions of emotional needs, and biologists embraced Charles Darwin’s naturalistic explanation for the variety of life forms on Earth advanced in *Origin of Species* (1859).

Fundamentalism Evangelical movement that taught literal interpretation of the Bible

While liberal Protestants generally accepted the findings of science, evangelical believers resisted. This gave rise to a movement called **Fundamentalism**, after *The Fundamentals*, a series of essays published in 1909–1914. Fundamentalists insisted on the Bible’s literal truth, including the Genesis account of Creation.

In the early 1920s, fundamentalists targeted Darwin’s theory of evolution. Many states considered legislation to bar public schools from teaching evolution, and several southern states enacted such laws. The former Democratic presidential candidate and secretary of state William Jennings Bryan, still widely admired in the American heartland, endorsed the antievolution cause.

When Tennessee’s legislature barred the teaching of evolution in the state’s public schools in 1925, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) offered to defend any teacher willing to challenge this law. A high-school teacher in Dayton, Tennessee, John T. Scopes, encouraged by local businessmen eager to promote their town, accepted the offer. Scopes summarized Darwin’s theory to a science class and was arrested. Famed criminal lawyer Clarence Darrow headed the defense, while Bryan assisted the prosecution. Journalists poured into Dayton, and a Chicago radio station broadcast the proceedings live. The **Scopes trial** became a media sensation.

Scopes trial Trial of John T. Scopes, the Tennessee teacher accused of violating the state’s antievolution law

Cross-examined by Darrow, Bryan embraced the fundamentalist view of the Bible and dismissed evolutionary theory. Although the jury found Scopes guilty

(in a decision later reversed on a technicality), the trial exposed Fundamentalism to ridicule. When Bryan died of a heart attack soon after, H. L. Mencken wrote a column mercilessly deriding him and his fundamentalist admirers.

Despite the setback in Dayton, Fundamentalism survived. Mainstream Protestant denominations grew more liberal, but many local congregations, radio preachers, Bible schools, new denominations, and flamboyant evangelists like Billy Sunday upheld the traditional faith. Southern and western states continued to pass antievolution laws, and textbook publishers deleted or modified their treatment of evolution to appease local school boards.

In Los Angeles, Aimee Semple McPherson, anticipating later TV evangelists, filled her cavernous Angelus Temple and reached thousands more by radio. The charismatic McPherson entranced audiences with theatrical sermons. She once used a gigantic electric scoreboard to illustrate the triumph of good over evil. Her followers, mainly transplanted midwesterners, embraced her fundamentalist theology while enjoying her mass-entertainment techniques. At her death in 1944, her International Church of the Foursquare Gospel had more than six hundred branches in the United States and abroad.

The Ku Klux Klan

The tensions gripping American society of the 1920s also bubbled up in the form of a resurrected Ku Klux Klan (KKK). The original Klan of the Reconstruction South eventually faded (see Chapter 16), but in 1915 hooded men gathered at Stone Mountain, Georgia, and revived it. D. W. Griffith's glorification of the original Klan in his 1915 movie *The Birth of a Nation* provided further inspiration.



The Ku Klux Klan in Washington, DC

In a brazen display of power, the Ku Klux Klan organized a march in the nation's capital in 1926. By this time, however, the Klan was already in decline.

The movement remained obscure until 1920, when two Atlanta entrepreneurs organized a national membership drive to exploit the appeal of the Klan's ritual and its nativist, white-supremacist ideology. Their wildly successful scheme involved a ten-dollar membership fee divided among the salesman and their managers at the state and national level—with a rake-off to themselves. The sale of Klan robes, masks, horse blankets, and the bottled Chattahoochee River water used in initiation rites added to the take.

Preaching "100 percent Americanism," the Klan demonized blacks, Catholics, Jews, aliens, and, in some cases, women suspected of violating sexual taboos. Membership estimates for the KKK and its women's auxiliary in the early 1920s range as high as 5 million. From its southern base, the Klan spread through the Midwest and across the country from Long Island to the West Coast. Most of its members came from blue-collar ranks.

Although corrupt at the top and basically a money-making scam, the Klan was not a haven for criminals or fanatics. Observers commented on members' ordinariness. The Klan's litany of enemies and its promise to restore the nation's lost purity—racial, ethnic, religious, and moral—appealed to economically marginal Protestants disoriented by a new social order of giant corporations, mass media, rebellious youth, and immigrant-filled cities. The rituals, parades, and night-time cross burnings added a jolt of drama and a sense of camaraderie to lonely, unfulfilling lives.

But the Klan's menace as a mass movement was real. Some KKK groups employed threats, beatings, and lynching in their quest to purify America. In several states, the Klan won political power. For example, the Oregon Klan elected a governor and enacted legislation requiring all children to attend public school, which was an attempt to destroy the state's Catholic schools.

The Klan collapsed with shocking suddenness. In March 1925, Indiana's Grand Dragon, David Stephenson, brutally raped his young secretary, who swallowed poison and died several weeks later. In prison, Stephenson revealed sordid details of political corruption. Its moral pretensions in shreds, the KKK faded. When civil-rights activism surged in the 1950s, however, the Klan would again rear its head.

The Garvey Movement

Among African-Americans who fled southern rural poverty and racism only to experience discrimination and racism in the urban North, the decade's social strains

produced a different kind of mass movement, led by the spellbinding **Marcus Garvey** and his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Born in Jamaica in 1887, Garvey founded UNIA in 1914 and two years later moved to Harlem, which became the movement's headquarters. In a white-dominated society, Garvey glorified all things black. Urging black economic solidarity, he founded UNIA grocery stores and other businesses. He summoned blacks to return to "Motherland Africa" and established the Black Star Steamship Line to help them get there.

An estimated eighty thousand blacks joined UNIA, drawn by the appeal of the vision of economic self-sufficiency and a glorious future in Africa. Garvey's popularity unsettled the NAACP's middle-class leaders, who advocated racial integration rather than separation. W. E. B. Du Bois was among Garvey's sharpest critics.

Marcus Garvey Founder of the "Back to Africa" movement

In 1923, a federal court convicted Garvey of fraud in the management of his Black Star Steamship Line. In 1927, after two years' imprisonment, he was deported to Jamaica, and the UNIA collapsed. Nonetheless, this first mass movement in black America revealed both the social aspirations and the activist potential of African-Americans in the urban North. The NAACP, meanwhile, remained active even in a reactionary decade with racism rampant. In some three hundred branches nationwide, members kept the civil-rights cause alive and patiently laid the groundwork for legal challenges to segregation.

Prohibition: Cultures in Conflict

A bitter controversy over alcohol further exposed the fissures in American society. As noted in Chapter 21, the Progressive Era **prohibition** campaign was both a legitimate effort to address social problems associated with alcohol abuse and a weapon in the struggle of native-born Americans to control the immigrant cities. These tensions persisted in the 1920s. When the Eighteenth Amendment took effect in 1920, prohibitionists rejoiced. Saloons closed, liquor advertising vanished, and arrests for drunkenness declined. Yet prohibition gradually lost support, and in 1933 it ended.

What went wrong? Essentially, prohibition's failure illustrates the difficulty in a democracy of enforcing a widely opposed law. The Volstead Act, the 1919 prohibition law, was underfunded and weakly enforced. Would-be drinkers grew bolder as enforcement faltered. For many young people, alcohol's illegality increased its appeal. Challenging the prohibition law, declared one college student, represented "the natural reaction of youth to rules and regulations."

Every city harbored speakeasies where customers could buy drinks. In addition, people concocted home brew and sacramental wine sales soared. By 1929, alcohol consumption reached about 70 percent of pre-war levels.

Organized crime helped circumvent the law. Chicago, where rival gangs battled to control the liquor business, witnessed 550 gangland killings in the 1920s. Speakeasies controlled by Chicago gangster Al Capone generated annual profits of \$60 million. Although not typical, Chicago's crime wave underscored prohibition's failure. A reform designed to improve the nation's morality was turning citizens into lawbreakers and mobsters into celebrities.

Thus prohibition, too, became a battleground in the decade's cultural wars and politics. The "drys"—usually native-born Protestants—praised it. The "wets"—liberals, Jazz Age rebels, big-city immigrants—condemned it as moralistic meddling. Prohibition also influenced the 1928 presidential campaign. While Democratic candidate Al Smith advocated repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, Republican Herbert Hoover praised it as "a great social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose." When the Eighteenth Amendment was finally repealed in 1933, prohibition seemed little more than a relic of another age.

prohibition Ban on alcohol consumption by the Eighteenth Amendment, effective 1920; after its failure, it was repealed in 1933

CHECKING IN

- Many Americans found rapid change disorienting and frightening, which led to reaction and protest.
- Immigration restriction was an attempt to keep out the "wrong sort" of people.
- The Sacco-Vanzetti case highlighted a resurgence of nativism and the cultural divide between the country's conservatives and liberals.
- The Scopes trial showed the enormous gap between religious fundamentalists and Americans who accepted modern science.
- The Ku Klux Klan attracted millions of ill-educated, deeply religious, and economically marginal Americans, and functioned as an all-purpose hate group.
- Prohibition, although it failed, asserted traditional morality over urban, immigrant culture.

HOOVER AT THE HELM

How did Herbert Hoover's social and political thought differ from that of Harding and Coolidge?

Herbert Hoover, elected president in 1928, appeared well fitted to sustain the nation's prosperity. No standpat conservative like Harding and Coolidge, his social and political philosophy reflected his engineering background. Therefore, he seemed the ideal president for the new technological age.

The Election of 1928

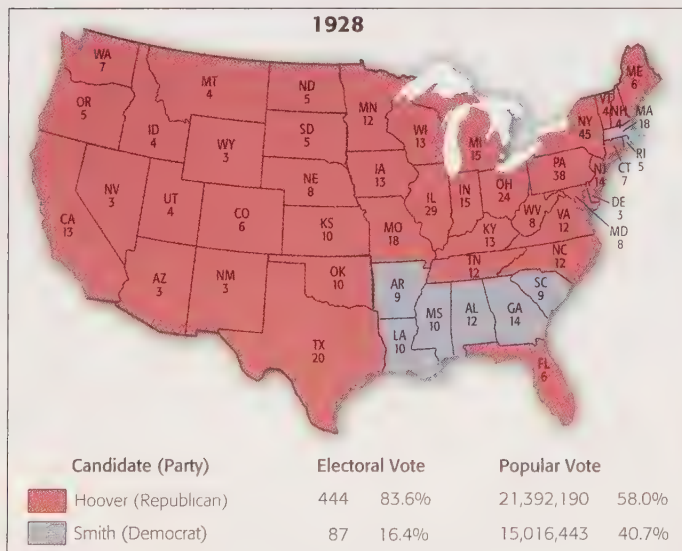
A Hollywood casting agent could not have chosen two individuals who better personified America's divisions than the 1928 presidential candidates, Al Smith and Herbert Hoover. New York governor Al Smith easily won the Democratic nomination. A Catholic and a “wet,” his brown derby perpetually askew, Smith exuded the flavor of immigrant New York. Originally a machine politician, he had impressed reformers by backing social-welfare measures.

Herbert Hoover won the Republican nomination after Coolidge chose not to run. However, some conservative party leaders mistrusted the brilliant but aloof Hoover, who had never held elective office and had spent much of his adult life abroad. An Iowan orphaned early in life, Hoover had put himself through Stanford University and made a fortune as a mining engineer in China and Australia. After his tour as wartime food administrator, he had served as secretary of commerce since 1921.

Disdaining conventional campaigning, Hoover instead issued reports and read radio speeches in a droning monotone that obscured the originality of his ideas. Smith campaigned spiritedly throughout the country—a strategy that may have harmed him, for his big-city wisecracking and New York accent put off many voters.

The effect of Smith's Catholicism remains debatable. Hoover urged tolerance, and Smith denied any conflict between his faith and the duties of the presidency. Nonetheless, anti-Catholic prejudice played a role in the campaign. Rumors circulated that Smith would follow the Vatican's orders if he won. The decisive issue was probably not popery but prosperity. Republican orators pointed to the booming economy and warned of “soup kitchens instead of busy factories” if Smith won. In his nomination-acceptance speech, Hoover grandly predicted “the final triumph over poverty.”

Hoover won in a landslide, grabbing 58 percent of the vote and even making deep inroads in the Democratic South (see Map 23.1).



Map 23.1 The Election of 1928

Although Hoover won every state but Massachusetts and six Deep South states, Smith's 1928 vote in the midwestern farm belt and the nation's largest cities showed significant gains over 1924.



Interactive Map

However, the outcome also hinted at an emerging political realignment. Smith did well among hard-pressed midwestern farmers angered by Coolidge's insensitivity to their plight. In northern cities, Catholic and Jewish wards voted heavily Democratic. Smith carried the nation's twelve largest cities, all of which had gone Republican in 1924. Should prosperity falter, these portents suggested, the Republican Party faced trouble.

Herbert Hoover's Social Thought

Americans dubbed Hoover "the Great Engineer." Although a self-made man, he did not uncritically praise the capitalist system. His Quaker background, humanitarian activities, engineering experience, and Republican loyalties combined to produce a unique social outlook.

Like Theodore Roosevelt, Hoover opposed untrammelled free-market competition. Rational economic development, he insisted, demanded corporate cooperation in resource allocation, product standardization, and other areas. The economy, in short, should operate like an efficient machine. But above all, he advocated voluntarism. He felt the efficient, socially responsible economic order he envisioned must arise from the voluntary action of capitalist leaders, not government coercion.

As secretary of commerce, Hoover had convened more than 250 conferences with business leaders. He urged higher wages to increase consumer purchasing power. During the 1927 Mississippi River floods, as President Coolidge remained in Washington, Hoover had rushed to the stricken area to mobilize private relief efforts.

A conservationist, Secretary of Commerce Hoover had pushed for a number of environmental laws. In 1922, he negotiated a compact among western states for a division of Colorado River water. This agreement opened the way for a dam on the Colorado to provide hydroelectric power and water for irrigation. Construction began on Hoover Dam in 1930. (In an act of petty politics, Democrats changed the name to Boulder Dam in 1933, but Congress restored the original name in 1947.)

Hoover's ideology had limitations. He showed more enthusiasm for cooperation among capitalists than among consumers or workers. His belief that capitalists would voluntarily embrace enlightened labor policies overestimated the role of altruism in business decision making. And his opposition to government economic intervention brought him grief when such intervention became urgently necessary.

Still, Hoover's presidency began promisingly. Responding to the farm problem, he persuaded Congress to create a Federal Farm Board to promote cooperative marketing. This, he hoped, would raise farm prices while preserving the voluntarist principle. Meanwhile, however, an economic crisis was approaching that would overwhelm and ultimately destroy his presidency.

CHECKING IN

- The election of 1928 pitted urban immigrant champion Al Smith against self-made millionaire Herbert Hoover.
- Smith's Catholicism became a central issue in the campaign.
- Hoover's victory came with evidence of political realignment, as urban voters went heavily for Smith.
- Hoover believed strongly in voluntarism and welfare capitalism, but his ideas were limited by his opposition to direct government economic intervention.

Chapter Summary

What economic innovations came in the 1920s, and what was their effect on different social groups? (page 553)

The assembly line and mass production created the consumer economy with the automobile at its center. Advertising flourished. Farmers, however, were left out of the general prosperity. More women graduated from college, but few held high-wage industrial jobs. The labor union movement struggled.

What political and social ideas shaped the administrations of Presidents Harding and Coolidge? (page 557)

The Harding administration was stained by corruption. Both administrations were staunchly probusiness and wanted nothing to do with progressivism. Internationally, the United States followed an isolationist course but pursued its own national interest through independent internationalism. A split between rural and urban wings divided the Democratic Party, and the women's movement also splintered.

What developments underlay 1920s' mass culture, and how did they affect American life and leisure? (page 561)

The automobile had a major social as well as economic impact. Mass culture grew from the development of radio networks, large-circulation magazines, and movies. Celebrity culture celebrated heroes like Babe Ruth and Charles Lindbergh, and professional sports flourished. Skyscrapers, radio, the automobile, the movies, and electrical appliances—all familiar today—were exciting novelties in 1920s America.

What social developments contributed to the cultural creativity of the 1920s? (page 565)

The open sexuality of the Jazz Age, jazz music, and the flapper shocked many. Young people, freed from parental authority by the automobile, behaved in ways that seemed licentious to their elders. Alienated writers fled to Paris, and a literary renaissance among African-Americans flourished in Harlem.

What events or movements revealed the major social and cultural conflicts of the 1920s? (page 568)

Rapid change itself was disorienting. Immigration restrictions sought to keep out the “wrong sort” of people, the Sacco-Vanzetti case demonstrated the resurgence of nativism and the cultural divide in the nation, and the Ku Klux Klan functioned as an all-purpose hate group. Prohibition represented an unsuccessful attack on urban, immigrant culture. The Scopes trial reflected the fundamentalist rejection of modern science.

KEY TERMS

Henry Ford (p. 553)

Teapot Dome (p. 558)

Calvin Coolidge (p. 558)

McNary-Haugen Bill (p. 558)

Washington Naval Arms Conference (p. 560)

Ku Klux Klan (p. 560)

Alfred E. Smith (p. 560)

Sheppard-Towner Act (p. 560)

Charles Lindbergh (p. 565)

H. L. Mencken (p. 566)

National Origins Act (p. 569)

Sacco and Vanzetti (p. 570)

Fundamentalism (p. 570)

Scopes trial (p. 570)

Marcus Garvey (p. 572)

prohibition (p. 573)

How did Herbert Hoover's social and political thought differ from that of Harding and Coolidge? (page 574)

In many ways, the election summed up the conflicts of the 1920s. It pitted Al Smith, the epitome of urban immigrant culture, against Herbert Hoover, who seemed to be the embodiment of a Horatio Alger story. Smith's Catholicism dominated much of the political discussion. Hoover's victory represented a last hurrah for the rural traditionalism of the Republican Party and put into the White House a man whose political philosophy proved inadequate to the demands of the Great Depression.



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

The Great Depression and the New Deal

CHAPTER 24

1929–1939

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Crash and Depression, 1929–1932

What caused the Great Depression, and how did President Hoover respond?

The New Deal Takes Shape, 1933–1935

What strategy guided the early New Deal, and what problems and challenges arose in 1934–1935?

The New Deal Changes Course, 1935–1936

What key measures and setbacks marked the course of the New Deal from 1935 on?

The New Deal's End Stage, 1937–1939

How did the New Deal end?

Social Change and Social Action in the 1930s

How did the depression and the New Deal affect specific social groups in the United States?

The American Cultural Scene in the 1930s

What key developments shaped American culture in the 1930s?



FBI Library

President Franklin D. Roosevelt

Franklin Delano Roosevelt seemed to have everything. Charming, handsome, and the scion of a well-to-do family, he had found life easy. Not yet forty, he had served as assistant secretary of the navy during World War I and had been the Democratic vice-presidential candidate in 1920. But

while on vacation with his family in August 1921, Roosevelt was stricken with paralysis in his legs. He had suffered an attack of poliomyelitis. Except for a cumbersome shuffle with crutches and heavy metal braces, he would never walk again.

The illness could have marked the end of his career, but he endured endless therapy and gradually reentered politics. In 1928,

laboriously mounting the podium at the Democratic National Convention, he nominated his friend Al Smith for president. That fall, he was elected governor of New York.

Roosevelt's disability profoundly shaped his personality. The ordeal changed him from a superficial, even arrogant, man into a person of greater compassion and far more understanding of the disadvantaged. "If you had spent two years in bed trying to wiggle your big toe," he once said, "after that every thing else would seem easy!"

Eleanor Roosevelt devoted herself to her husband's care, ultimately encouraging him to return to politics. At the same time, she joined the executive board of the New York Democratic Party and edited the women's division newsletter. Although painfully shy, she forced herself to make public speeches.

The Roosevelts would soon need these acquired characteristics. Elected president in 1932 amid the worst depression in U.S. history, Franklin Roosevelt dominated U.S. politics until his death in 1945. The early years of Roosevelt's long presidency spawned a dizzying array of laws, agencies, and programs. From 1933 to 1935, the first phase of the New Deal emphasized relief and recovery through a united national effort. In 1935, Roosevelt charted a more radical course. The so-called Second New Deal (1935 and after) placed less emphasis on unity and more on business regulation and on policies benefiting workers, small farmers, sharecroppers, migrant laborers, and others at the lower end of the scale.

This chapter develops two themes. The first is the New Deal's expansive view of the government's role in promoting economic and social welfare. The second is the American people's response to the Depression. From factory workers, urban blacks, and Hispanic migrant laborers to moviemakers, artists, and writers, diverse groups met the crisis with resourcefulness, creativity, and organized social action.

CRASH AND DEPRESSION, 1929–1932

What caused the Great Depression, and how did President Hoover respond?

The prosperity of the 1920s ended in October 1929 with the stock-market collapse. The Wall Street crash, and the deeper economic problems that underlay it, launched a depression that hit every household. President Hoover's commitment to private initiative and his distaste for direct federal intervention handcuffed him in providing a response. In November 1932, voters turned to the Democratic Party and its leader, Franklin Roosevelt. This election set the stage for a vast federal response to the crisis.

Black Thursday and the Onset of the Great Depression

Stock prices had risen through much of the 1920s, but 1928–1929 brought a frenzied upsurge as speculators plunged into the market. In 1925, the market value of all stocks stood at \$27 billion; by October 1929 it had hit \$87 billion. With stockbrokers lending buyers up to 75 percent of a stock's cost, credit or "margin" buying spread. The income-tax cuts promoted by Treasury

Chronology



1929	Stock market crash; onset of depression
1932	Reconstruction Finance Corporation; veterans' bonus march; Franklin D. Roosevelt elected president
1933	Repeal of Eighteenth Amendment; Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC); Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA); Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA); Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA); National Recovery Administration (NRA); Public Works Administration (PWA)
1934	Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC); Taylor Grazing Act; Indian Reorganization Act
1934–1936	Strikes by Mexican-American agricultural workers in the West
1935	Supreme Court declares NIRA unconstitutional; Works Progress Administration (WPA); Resettlement Administration; National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act); Social Security Act; NAACP campaign for federal anti-lynching law; Huey Long assassinated; Revenue Act raises taxes on corporations and the wealthy; Supreme Court reverses conviction of the "Scottsboro Boys"; Harlem riot
1935–1939	Era of the Popular Front
1936	Supreme Court declares AAA unconstitutional; Roosevelt wins landslide reelection victory; autoworkers' sit-down strike against General Motors begins (December)
1937	Roosevelt's "court-packing" plan defeated; Farm Security Administration; GM, U.S. Steel, and Chrysler sign union contracts
1937–1938	The "Roosevelt recession"
1938	Fair Labor Standards Act; Republicans gain heavily in midterm elections; Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) formed; Carnegie Hall concert by Benny Goodman Orchestra
1939	Hatch Act; Marian Anderson concert at Lincoln Memorial; John Steinbeck, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
1940	Ernest Hemingway, <i>For Whom the Bell Tolls</i>

Secretary Andrew Mellon increased the flow of money into the market. Upbeat statements also fed the boom. In 1928–1929, construction declined by 25 percent, but few heeded the warning.

In 1928, and again in September 1929, the Federal Reserve Board tried to dampen speculation by increasing interest rates. But with speculators paying up to 20 percent interest to buy more stock, lending institutions continued to loan money freely—equivalent to dumping gasoline on a raging fire.

The collapse came on October 24, 1929—"Black Thursday." As prices fell, some stocks found no buyers at all: They had become worthless. In the ensuing weeks, feeble upswings alternated with further plunges. President Hoover, in the first of many optimistic statements, pronounced the economy "sound and prosperous." After a weak upswing early in 1930, the economy went into a long tailspin, producing a full-scale depression.

What caused the depression? Structural weaknesses in the American economy made the 1920s' prosperity unstable. Agriculture remained depressed throughout the decade. In the industrial sector, wage increases lagged behind factory output, reducing consumer purchasing power. At the same time, assembly-line methods encouraged overproduction. By summer 1929, not only housing, but also the automobile, textile, tire, and other major industries were seriously overextended. Further,

key industries such as railroads, steel, textiles, and mining lagged technologically in the 1930s and could not attract the investment needed to stimulate recovery.

All analysts link the U.S. depression to a global economic crisis. European economies, struggling with war-debt payments and a severe trade imbalance with the United States, collapsed in 1931, crippling the U.S. export market.

The worsening depression devastated the U.S. economy. From 1929 to 1932, the gross national product dropped from \$104 billion to \$59 billion. Farm prices, already low, fell by nearly 60 percent. By early 1933, more than fifty-five hundred banks had closed, and unemployment stood at 25 percent, or nearly 13 million workers. In some cities, the jobless rate surged far higher. Many who still had jobs faced cuts in pay and hours.

Hoover's Response

Historically, Americans had viewed depressions as similar to natural disasters: Little could be done other than ride out the storm. President Hoover disagreed. Drawing upon his experience as U.S. food administrator in World War I and as secretary of commerce, Hoover initially responded boldly. However, his belief in private initiative limited his options.

Hoover urged business leaders to maintain wages and employment. Viewing unemployment as a local issue, he advised city and state officials to create public-works projects. In October 1930, he set up an Emergency Committee for Employment to coordinate voluntary relief efforts. In 1931, he persuaded the nation's largest banks to create a private lending agency to help smaller banks make business loans.

However, the crisis intensified, and public opinion turned against Hoover. In the 1930 midterm election, the Republicans lost the House of Representatives and gave up eight Senate seats. In 1931, dreading a budget deficit, Hoover called for a tax increase, further angering hard-pressed Americans. That same year, despite their pledges, U.S. Steel and other big corporations slashed wages. The crisis swamped private charities and local welfare agencies.

In 1932, a presidential election year, Hoover swallowed his principles and took a bold step. In January, at Hoover's recommendation, Congress set up a new agency, the **Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC)**, to make loans to banks and other lending institutions. By July, the RFC had pumped \$1.2 billion into the economy. The RFC also granted \$2 billion to state and local governments for job-creating public-works programs.

Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) Agency established by Hoover to provide funds to banks and insurance companies

Hoover supported these measures reluctantly, warning of "socialism and collectivism." He blamed global forces for the depression and argued that only international measures would help. His call for a moratorium on war-debt and reparations payments by European nations made sense, but seemed irrelevant to the plight of ordinary Americans. As Hoover urged self-help and local initiative and predicted recovery "just around the corner," his unpopularity deepened.

Mounting Discontent and Protest

An ominous mood spread as hordes of the jobless waited in breadlines, slept on park benches, trudged the streets, and rode freight trains seeking work. Americans reared on

the ethic of hard work and self-reliance found chronic unemployment deeply demoralizing.

The *New York Times* described “Hoover Valley,” a section of Central Park where jobless men lived in boxes and packing crates, keeping warm with layers of newspapers they bitterly called Hoover blankets. The suicide rate soared. Violence threatened to erupt in some cities when landlords evicted families unable to pay their rent.

Hard times battered the nation’s farms, and many farmers lost their land because of tax delinquency. At some forced farm auctions, neighbors bought the foreclosed farm for a trivial sum and returned it to the evicted family. In 1931, midwestern farmers organized the Farmers’ Holiday Association to force prices up by withholding grain and livestock from the market, and dairy farmers dumped thousands of gallons of milk.

The most alarming protest came from World War I veterans. In 1924, Congress had voted veterans a bonus stretched over a twenty-year period. In June 1932, some ten thousand veterans, many jobless, descended on Washington to lobby for immediate payment. When Congress refused, most of the “bonus marchers” went home, but about two thousand stayed on, building makeshift shelters on the outskirts of Washington. President Hoover called in the army.

On July 28, troops commanded by General Douglas MacArthur and armed with tear gas, tanks, and machine guns drove the veterans from their camp and burned it to the ground. As a journalist described the aftermath, veterans and their families “wandered from street to street or sat in ragged groups, the men exhausted, the women with wet handkerchiefs laid over their smarting eyes, the children waking from sleep to cough and whimper from the tear gas in their lungs.” To many Americans, this action symbolized the administration’s heartlessness.

American writers shared the despairing mood. In *The 42nd Parallel* (1930), John Dos Passos drew a dark panorama of twentieth-century America as money-mad, exploitive, and lacking spiritual meaning. As one character says, “Everything you’ve wanted crumbles in your fingers as you grasp it.”

CHECKING IN

- A variety of economic problems, ranging from stock-market speculation to global economic problems, led to the crash and depression.
- Hoover turned to voluntarism to cope with the depression.
- The Reconstruction Finance Corporation was created to funnel money to banks and railroads, not directly to people.
- Americans grew increasingly angry at Hoover’s failure to respond to their plight; the bonus march of 1932 illustrated the depth of despair.
- In the election of 1932, Americans rejected Hoover and gave the White House and Congress to Roosevelt and the Democrats.

The Election of 1932

Gloom pervaded the 1932 Republican convention that re-nominated Hoover. The Democrats, in contrast, sensed victory and drafted a platform to appeal to urban immigrants, farmers, and fiscal conservatives. Rejecting Al Smith, the party’s 1928 candidate, the delegates nominated New York governor Franklin D. Roosevelt for president.

Breaking precedent, FDR flew to Chicago to accept the nomination in person, delivering a rousing speech promising “a new deal for the American people.” But his campaign provided few specifics. He called for “bold, persistent experimentation” and promised more attention to “the forgotten man” while attacking Hoover’s “reckless” spending.

Roosevelt exuded confidence, and above all he was not Hoover. On November 8, FDR and his running mate, John Nance Garner of Texas, received nearly 23 million votes, whereas Hoover received fewer than 16 million. Both houses of Congress went heavily Democratic.

THE NEW DEAL TAKES SHAPE, 1933–1935

What strategy guided the early New Deal, and what problems and challenges arose in 1934–1935?

The Roosevelt years began in a whirl of activity. An array of emergency measures proposed by Roosevelt and passed by Congress reflected three basic goals: industrial recovery through business-government cooperation and pump-priming federal spending; agricultural recovery through crop reduction; and short-term emergency relief distributed through state and local agencies when possible, but directly by the federal government if necessary. Presiding over this bustle, a confident FDR symbolized hope. By 1935, however, the New Deal faced problems, and opposition was building.

Roosevelt and His Circle

FDR's inaugural address exuded confidence and hope. "The only thing we have to fear," he intoned, "is fear itself." In an outpouring of support, half a million letters deluged

the White House.

Roosevelt seemed an unlikely popular hero. Like his distant cousin Theodore, he was of the social elite, from a long line of merchants and landed aristocrats. His Harvard-Columbia background highlighted his social status. But as a state senator and governor of New York, he had allied with the Democratic Party's urban-immigrant wing, and when the depression hit, he had introduced such innovative measures as unemployment insurance and a public-works program. Intent on promoting recovery while preserving capitalism and democracy, Roosevelt encouraged competing proposals, compromised on (or papered over) differences, and then backed the measures he sensed that Congress and the public would support.

Roosevelt brought to Washington a circle of advisers nicknamed the brain trust, many of them from universities. It included Columbia University professor Rexford G. Tugwell and lawyer Adolph A. Berle. However, no single ideology or set of advisers controlled the New Deal, for FDR sought a broad range of opinions.

Eleanor Roosevelt played a key role. A niece of Theodore Roosevelt, she expressed her keen social conscience in settlement-house work and Florence Kelley's National Consumers' League. Through her, FDR met reformers, social workers, and advocates of minority rights. Mrs. Roosevelt traveled ceaselessly, observing depression America firsthand for her wheelchair-bound husband.

Roosevelt's cabinet reflected the New Deal's diversity. Secretary of Labor **Frances Perkins**, the first woman cabinet member, had served as industrial commissioner of New York. Interior Secretary Harold Ickes had organized liberal Republicans for Roosevelt in 1932. Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, Jr., FDR's neighbor and political ally, though a fiscal conservative, tolerated the spending necessary to finance New Deal anti-depression programs.

Newcomers poured into Washington in 1933—former progressives, liberal-minded professors, and bright young lawyers. They drafted bills, staffed government agencies, and debated recovery strategies. From this pressure-cooker environment emerged the laws, programs, and agencies gathered under a catch-all label: the New Deal.

Eleanor Roosevelt Wife of FDR; redefined the role of First Lady and influenced social policy during the New Deal

Frances Perkins Former Progressive reformer and first woman cabinet member; led the committee that wrote the Social Security Act

**Eleanor Roosevelt Visits a
Nursery School in Des Moines
Operated by the Works
Progress Administration,
June 1936**

Intensely shy as a young woman, Mrs. Roosevelt played an active, influential, and highly visible role during her years as First Lady.



FDR Library

The Hundred Days

Between March and June, 1933, a period labeled the “Hundred Days,” Congress enacted more than a dozen major bills (see Table 24.1). Drawing upon precedents from the Progressive Era, World War I, and the Hoover presidency, these measures expanded Washington’s involvement in America’s economic life.

FDR first addressed the banking crisis. As borrowers defaulted, depositors withdrew savings, and homeowners missed mortgage payments, thousands of banks failed, undermining confidence in the system. On March 5 he ordered all banks to close for four days. At the end of this so-called bank holiday, he proposed an Emergency Banking Act, which permitted healthy banks to reopen, set up procedures to manage failed banks, increased government oversight, and required that banks separate savings deposits from their investment funds. Congress also created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to insure bank deposits up to

TABLE 24.1 MAJOR MEASURES ENACTED DURING THE “HUNDRED DAYS” (MARCH 9–JUNE 16, 1933)

March 9	Emergency Banking Relief Act
20	Economy Act
31	Unemployment Relief Act (Civilian Conservation Corps)
May 12	Agricultural Adjustment Act; Federal Emergency Relief Act
18	Tennessee Valley Authority
27	Federal Securities Act
June 13	Home Owners’ Refinancing Act
16	Farm Credit Act; Banking Act of 1933 (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation); National Industrial Recovery Act (National Recovery Administration; Public Works Administration)

\$5,000. In the first of a series of radio talks dubbed “fireside chats,” FDR assured Americans that they could again trust their banks.

Other measures addressed the urgent plight of Americans struggling to survive. Two new agencies assisted those who were losing their homes. The Home Owners Loan Corporation helped city-dwellers refinance their mortgages. The Farm Credit Administration provided loans to rural Americans to meet their farm payments.

Another early relief program, the **Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)**, employed jobless youths in environmentally friendly government projects such as reforestation, park maintenance, and erosion control. By 1935, half a million young men were earning thirty-five dollars a month in CCC camps—a godsend to desperate families. The principal relief measure of the Hundred Days, the **Federal Emergency Relief Act**, provided \$500 million to fill the empty relief coffers of states and cities. To head this program, FDR chose Harry Hopkins, the relief administrator in New York State, who soon emerged as a powerful New Deal figure.

While supplying immediate relief, the early New Deal also faced the longer-term challenge of promoting agricultural and industrial recovery. Some New Dealers advocated reduced production as a means of raising farm prices. As a first step to cutting production, the government paid southern cotton planters to plow under much of their crop and midwestern farmers to slaughter some 6 million piglets and pregnant sows. However, destroying crops and killing pigs at a time of widespread hunger proved a public-relations nightmare. Pursuing the same goal more systematically, Congress passed the Agricultural Adjustment Act in May 1933. This law gave payments, called subsidies, to producers of the major farm commodities—including hogs, wheat, corn, cotton, and dairy products—in return for cutting production. A tax on food processors (a tax ultimately passed along to consumers) financed these subsidies. A new agency, the **Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)**, supervised the program.

The other key recovery measure of the Hundred Days, the National Industrial Recovery Act, appropriated \$3.3 billion for heavy-duty government public-works programs to provide jobs and stimulate the economy. Interior Secretary Harold

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Agency that employed millions of young men

Federal Emergency Relief Act Keystone of the early New Deal that provided relief funds to cities and states

Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) Agency overseeing the effort to help farmers by reducing production and raising prices

National Recovery Administration (NRA)

Attempt to gain cooperation in recovery efforts among government, business, and labor leaders

Ickes headed the Public Works Administration (PWA), the agency that ran this program.

This law also set up the **National Recovery Administration (NRA)**. The NRA brought together business leaders to draft codes of “fair competition” for their industries. These codes set production limits, wages, and working conditions, and forbade price cutting and unfair competitive practices. The aim was to promote recovery by breaking the cycle of wage cuts, falling prices, and layoffs. However, some New Dealers had further goals. Under pressure from Labor Secretary Frances Perkins, the NRA’s textile-industry code banned child labor. And thanks to Senator Robert Wagner of New York, Section 7a of the NIRA affirmed workers’ rights to organize unions and to bargain collectively.

The NRA’s success depended on voluntary support by both business and the public. NRA officials used parades, billboards, magazine ads, and celebrity events to persuade people to patronize only companies that subscribed to an NRA code and displayed the NRA symbol, a blue eagle, as well as its slogan, “We Do Our Part.”

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), dating from the Hoover years, remained active in the New Deal era. The RFC lent billions of dollars to banks, insurance companies, and even new business ventures. The early New Deal thus had a strong probusiness flavor.

A few measures adopted during the Hundred Days, however, took a tougher approach to business. The 1929 crash produced a strong antibusiness reaction. A Senate investigation of Wall Street discovered that none of the twenty partners of the Morgan Bank had paid any income tax in 1931 or 1932. People jeered when the president of the New York Stock Exchange told a Senate committee considering regulatory measures, “You gentlemen are making a big mistake. The Exchange is a perfect institution.”

Reflecting the public mood, Congress in 1933 passed the Federal Securities Act requiring corporations to inform the government fully on all stock offerings. This law also made executives personally liable for any misrepresentation of securities their companies issued. In 1934 Congress created the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to enforce the new regulations.

The most innovative program of the Hundred Days was the **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)**. This program advanced the economic and social development of the poverty-stricken Tennessee River valley. TVA dams brought electricity to the region, provided recreational facilities, and reduced flooding and soil erosion. Under director David Lilienthal, TVA proved one of the New Deal’s most popular and enduring achievements.

The mind-boggling burst of laws and the “alphabet-soup” of new agencies during the Hundred Days symbolized both the dynamism and the confusion of the New Deal. How these new programs and agencies would work in practice remained to be seen.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Ambitious plan of economic development; centered on dam building for the poor Appalachian area

Problems and Controversies Plague the Early New Deal

As the depression persisted, several early New Deal programs, including the NRA and the AAA, faltered. The NRA’s problems related partly to the personality of its director, the hard-driving, hard-drinking Hugh Johnson, who left in 1934. But the trouble went deeper. Corporate America resisted NRA

regulation. Code violations increased. Small businesses complained that the codes favored big corporations. Corporate trade associations used the codes to stifle competition and fix prices.

In May 1935, the Supreme Court unanimously declared the NRA unconstitutional. The Court ruled that the act gave the president regulatory powers that belonged to Congress and that it regulated commerce within states, violating the Constitution's limitation of federal regulation to commerce between or among states. Few mourned this ruling. As a recovery measure, the NRA had failed.

The AAA, too, proved controversial. Farm prices did rise as production fell, and from 1933 to 1937 overall farm income increased by 50 percent. But the AAA's crop-reduction payments actually hurt southern tenants and sharecroppers, who faced eviction as cotton planters removed acreage from production.

While some New Dealers focused on raising total agricultural income, others took a more class-based approach and urged attention to the poorest farmers. Their cause was strengthened as a parching drought centered in the Oklahoma panhandle region turned much of the Great Plains into a dust bowl (see Map 24.1). Each summer from 1934 through 1939, clouds of dust spread eastward, darkening the skies over coastal cities. As a dense dust cloud passed over Washington, DC, one legislator commented: "There goes Oklahoma."

Battered farmers abandoned the land in droves. Nearly 3.5 million people left the Great Plains in the 1930s. Some migrated to the cities; others packed their few belongings into old cars and headed west. Although from different states, they all bore the derisive nickname Okies.


Rivalries and policy differences also plagued New Deal relief. While Harold Ickes, head of the Public Works Administration, was super-cautious, **Harry Hopkins** was impatient to get money circulating. As unemployment continued, Hopkins

Harry Hopkins A former administrator of New York State charitable organizations; emerged as one of the most powerful figures in the New Deal



Map 24.1 The Dust Bowl

From the Dakotas southward to the Mexican border, farmers in the Great Plains suffered from a lack of rainfall and severe soil erosion in the 1930s, worsening the hardships of the Great Depression.

 **Interactive Map**

convinced Roosevelt to support direct federal relief programs, rather than channeling funds through state and local agencies. Late in 1933, FDR named Hopkins to head a temporary public-works agency, the Civil Works Administration (CWA), which through the winter expended nearly a billion dollars on short-term work projects for the jobless. When warm weather returned, FDR abolished the CWA. Like his conservative critics, he feared creating a permanent underclass living on relief. But persistent unemployment that swamped local relief agencies made further federal programs inevitable.

1934–1935: Challenges from Right and Left

Despite the New Deal's brave beginnings, the depression persisted. In 1934 national income rose about 25 percent above 1933 levels but remained far below that of 1929.

Millions had been jobless for three or four years. The rising frustration found expression in 1934 in nearly two thousand strikes, some of them communist-led. With the NRA under attack, conflict flaring over farm policy, and relief spending growing rather than declining, criticism mounted. Conservatives attacked the New Deal as socialistic. Anti-Roosevelt jokes circulated among the rich, many of whom denounced him as a traitor to his class.

But the New Deal remained popular, and FDR commanded the public stage. Pursuing the national-unity theme, he exhorted Americans to join the battle for economic recovery just as they had united for war in 1917. Although Republican newspaper publishers remained hostile, FDR enjoyed good relations with the working press, and journalists responded with favorable stories. FDR also savored public appearances and took naturally to radio. His easy mastery of radio provided a model for his successors in the television era.

CHECKING IN

- FDR's own optimism, combined with his ability to convey it to the American people, was probably his single most important asset.
- The major goals of the New Deal were industrial recovery, agricultural recovery, and short-term relief.
- During the "Hundred Days," Congress rushed through major measures, such as the Federal Emergency Relief Act, the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and the Civilian Conservation Corps.
- The New Deal also featured reforms, such as the establishment of the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and innovations, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority.
- Demagogues like Father Coughlin, Francis Townsend, and Huey Long peddled snake-oil alternatives to New Deal programs.

The 1934 midterm election ratified the New Deal's popularity as the Democrats increased their majorities in the House and Senate. Kansas journalist William Allen White observed of FDR that "he's been all but crowned by the people."

Still, the political scene remained unstable. While conservatives criticized the New Deal for going too far, critics on the left attacked it for not going far enough and ridiculed Roosevelt's efforts to include big business in his "all-American team."

Demagogues peddled various nostrums. The Detroit Catholic priest and radio spellbinder Charles Coughlin viciously attacked FDR, made anti-Semitic allusions, and called for nationalization of the banks. For a time, Coughlin's National Union of Social Justice attracted considerable support, mainly from the lower middle class.

Meanwhile, California doctor Francis E. Townsend proposed that the government pay \$200 monthly to all retired citizens, requiring them to spend it within thirty days. This plan, Townsend insisted, would help elderly Americans, stimulate the economy, and create jobs by encouraging retirement. Although the scheme would have bankrupted the nation, many older citizens rallied to Townsend's banner.

FDR's wildest rival was Huey Long of Louisiana. A country lawyer elected governor in 1928, Long built highways, schools, and public housing. He

roared into Washington as a senator in 1933 and preached his “Share Our Wealth” program: a 100 percent tax on annual incomes exceeding \$1 million and appropriation of all fortunes over \$5 million. Once this money was redistributed, Long promised, every family could enjoy a comfortable income. “Every man a king,” proclaimed Long. By 1935, he boasted 7.5 million supporters and clearly had his eye on the White House. Although an assassin’s bullet cut him down that September, his organization survived.

THE NEW DEAL CHANGES COURSE, 1935–1936

What key measures and setbacks marked the course of the New Deal from 1935 on?

Roosevelt responded vigorously to his challengers. As the 1936 election neared, Roosevelt shelved the unity theme and championed the poor and the working class. His 1935 State of the Union address outlined six initiatives: expanded public-works programs, assistance to the rural poor, support for organized labor, benefits for retired workers, tougher business regulation, and heavier taxes on the well-to-do. These priorities translated into a bundle of reform measures some called “the Second New Deal.” FDR’s landslide victory in 1936 solidified a new Democratic coalition.

Expanding Federal Relief

With unemployment still high, Congress in April 1935 passed the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act. FDR swiftly established the **Works Progress Administration (WPA)**. Like the CWA of the prior winter, the WPA funneled relief directly to individuals, and FDR insisted that the program provide work, not handouts. Over its eight-year life, the WPA employed more than 8 million Americans and constructed or improved vast numbers of bridges, roads, schools, post offices, and other public facilities.

The WPA also assisted writers, performers, and artists. The Federal Writers’ Project employed out-of-work authors to produce state guides and histories of ethnic and immigrant groups. In the South they collected the reminiscences of ex-slaves. Under the Federal Music Project, unemployed musicians gave free concerts, often featuring American composers. By 1938 more than 30 million Americans had attended these events.

The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) employed actors. One FTP project, the Living Newspaper, dramatized contemporary social issues and was criticized as New Deal propaganda. Nonetheless, FTP drama companies touring small-town America gave many their first taste of theater. Artists working for the Federal Arts Project designed posters, offered school courses, and decorated post offices and courthouses with murals. Another 1935 agency, the National Youth Administration (NYA), provided job training for unemployed youth and part-time work to enable college students to remain in school. Eleanor Roosevelt, viewing young people as the hope of the future, took particular pride in the NYA.

Works Progress Administration (WPA)

Massive public works program during the Second New Deal; included programs to employ artists, writers, and actors

Harold Ickes's Public Works Administration, after a slow start, eventually completed some thirty-four thousand major construction projects, from New York City's Lincoln Tunnel to the awesome Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River. The PWA employed thousands of jobless workers.

All this relief spending generated large federal budget deficits, cresting at \$4.4 billion in 1936. According to British economist John Maynard Keynes, governments should deliberately use deficit spending during depressions to fund public-works programs, thereby increasing purchasing power and stimulating recovery. The New Deal approach, however, was not Keynesian. Because every dollar spent on relief programs was counterbalanced by taxation or government borrowing, the stimulus effect was nil.

**Aiding Migrants,
Supporting Unions,
Regulating Business,
Taxing the Wealthy**

The second phase of the New Deal more frankly focused on the interests of workers, the poor, and the disadvantaged. Social-justice advocates like Frances Perkins and Eleanor Roosevelt helped shape this program, but so did hard-headed politics. Looking to 1936, FDR's political advisers feared that Coughlin, Townsend, and Long could siphon off enough votes to cost him the election. This worry underlay FDR's 1935 political agenda.

The Second New Deal's agricultural policy addressed the plight of sharecroppers (worsened by the AAA) and other poor farmers. The Resettlement Administration (1935) made loans to help tenant farmers buy their own farms and to enable sharecroppers, tenants, and dust-bowl migrants to move to more productive areas. The Rural Electrification Administration, also started in 1935, made low-interest loans to utility companies and farmers' cooperatives to extend electricity to the 90 percent of rural America that lacked it. By 1941, 40 percent of American farms enjoyed electricity.

The agricultural-recovery program suffered a setback in January 1936 when the Supreme Court declared the Agricultural Adjustment Act unconstitutional. The processing tax that funded the AAA's subsidies, the Court held, was an illegal use of the government's tax power. To replace the AAA, Congress passed a soil-conservation act that paid farmers to plant grasses and legumes instead of soil-depleting crops like wheat and cotton (which happened to be the major surplus commodities).

Organized labor won a key victory in 1935, again thanks to Senator Robert Wagner. Despite FDR's opposition during the New Deal's national-unity phase, Wagner built support for a prolabor law. In 1935, the Supreme Court ruled the NIRA unconstitutional, including Section 7a protecting union members' rights, and FDR called for a labor law that would survive court scrutiny. The **National Labor Relations Act** of July 1935 (the Wagner Act) guaranteed collective-bargaining rights, permitted closed shops (in which all employees must join a union), and outlawed such management tactics as blacklisting union organizers. The law created the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to supervise shop elections and deal with labor-law violations. A wave of unionization soon followed.

The Second New Deal's more class-conscious thrust shaped other 1935 measures. The Banking Act strengthened the Federal Reserve Board's control over the

National Labor Relations Act Measure that furthered industrial unionization

nation's financial system. The Public Utilities Holding Company Act, targeting the public-utility empires of the 1920s, restricted gas and electric companies to one geographic region. Also in 1935, Roosevelt called for steeper taxes on the rich. With the Wealth Tax Act, Congress raised taxes on corporations and on the well-to-do to a maximum of 75 percent on incomes above \$5 million. Although this law had many loopholes and was not quite the “soak the rich” measure some believed, it did express the Second New Deal's more radical spirit.

The Social Security Act of 1935: End of the Second New Deal

The **Social Security Act** of 1935 stands out among New Deal laws for its long-range significance. Drafted by a committee chaired by Frances Perkins, this measure established a mixed federal-state system of workers' pensions, survivors' benefits for victims of industrial accidents, unemployment insurance, and aid for disabled persons and dependent mothers and children. Taxes paid partly by employers and partly by workers (in the form of sums withheld from their paychecks) helped fund the program. This cut in take-home pay contributed to a recession in 1937, but it made sense politically because workers would resist any threat to a pension plan they had contributed to. As FDR put it, “With those taxes in there, no damned politician can ever scrap my social security program.”

Social Security Act Measure to establish old-age pensions, unemployment benefits, and care for widows and orphans

The initial Social Security Act paid low benefits and bypassed farmers, domestic workers, and the self-employed. However, it established the principle of federal responsibility for social welfare and laid the foundation for vastly expanded future welfare programs.

As 1935 ended, the Second New Deal was complete. Without embracing the panaceas preached by Coughlin, Townsend, or Long, FDR had addressed the grievances they had exploited. Although conservatives called this phase of the New Deal “antibusiness,” FDR always insisted that he had saved capitalism through prudent reform. Business interests remained influential in the 1930s, but the evolving New Deal also responded to other organized interest groups, including labor. And in 1935, with an election looming, New Deal strategists reached farther still, crafting legislation to aid sharecroppers, migrant workers, the disabled, the elderly, and others largely ignored by politicians of the past.

In the process, the New Deal enlarged the government's role in American life, as well as the power of the presidency. Americans began to expect presidents to offer programs and shape the terms of public debate. This decisively altered the power balance between the White House and Congress. Along with specific programs, the New Deal's importance thus also lay in how it enlarged the scope of the presidency and the social role of the state.

The 1936 Roosevelt Landslide and the New Democratic Coalition

FDR confidently faced the 1936 campaign. “There's one issue,” he told an aide; “it's myself, and people must be either for me or against me.”

The Republican candidate, Kansas governor Alfred Landon, a moderate fiscal conservative, proved an inept campaigner. FDR, by contrast, responded zestfully when Republicans lambasted his alleged dictatorial ambitions

or charged that the social security law would require all workers to wear metal dog tags. The forces of “selfishness and greed . . . are united in their hatred for me,” he declared at a tumultuous election-eve rally in New York City, “and I welcome their hatred.”

In the greatest landslide since 1820, FDR carried every state but Maine and Vermont. The Democrats increased their majorities in Congress. Roosevelt also buried candidates of the Socialist and Communist Parties, as well as of the Union Party (a coalition of Coughlin, Townsend, and Share Our Wealth enthusiasts).

FDR’s 1936 election announced the emergence of a new Democratic coalition. Since Reconstruction, the Democrats had counted on three bases of support: the white South, parts of the West, and urban white ethnic voters. FDR retained these centers of strength. He rarely challenged state or local party leaders who produced the votes, whether they supported the New Deal or not. FDR carried the nation’s twelve largest cities in 1936. Aided by New Deal relief programs, many city-dwellers idolized Roosevelt. In filling New Deal positions, FDR often turned to the newer urban-immigrant groups, including Catholics and Jews.

Expanding the Democratic base, FDR also courted farmers and union members. Republican midwestern farmers, won over by the New Deal’s agricultural program, voted accordingly. Union members, too, joined the Roosevelt bandwagon that year, and unions pumped money into Roosevelt’s campaign chest (though far less than business gave the Republicans). FDR’s reputation as a “friend of labor” proved unassailable.

African Americans came aboard as well. Although most southern blacks remained disfranchised, northern blacks could vote, and as late as 1932, two-thirds of them voted Republican, the party of Lincoln. The New Deal caused a historic shift in voting trends. In 1936, 76 percent of black voters supported FDR. In economic terms, this shift made sense. Owing mainly to racial discrimination, blacks’ unemployment rates in the 1930s surpassed those of the work force as a whole. Thus, jobless blacks benefited heavily from New Deal relief programs.

On issues of racial justice, however, the New Deal’s record was mixed at best. Some NRA codes included racially discriminatory clauses, causing black activists to deride the agency as “Negroes Ruined Again,” and other New Deal agencies tolerated racial bias. Roosevelt kept aloof from an NAACP campaign



National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Museum, Washington, DC/Art Resource, NY

***Marian Anderson at the Lincoln Memorial,
Painting by Betsy Graves Reyneau***

This painting portrays Marian Anderson at the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday, 1939, where her concert drew an audience of seventy-five thousand and was broadcast nationally. Eleanor Roosevelt and Harold Ickes arranged the event after the Daughters of the American Revolution denied the use of Constitution Hall.

to make lynching a federal crime. In 1935 and 1938, he remained passive as anti-lynching bills were narrowly defeated in Congress.

In limited ways, FDR did address racial issues. He worked cautiously to rid New Deal agencies of blatant racism. He appointed more than one hundred African-Americans to policy-level and judicial positions, including educator Mary McLeod Bethune as director of minority affairs in the National Youth Administration. Bethune led the “black cabinet” that served as a link between the New Deal and black organizations. Roosevelt’s Supreme Court appointees opposed racial discrimination in cases involving housing, voting rights, and other issues.

The New Deal also supported racial justice in symbolic ways. In 1938, when a meeting of an interracial welfare group in Birmingham, Alabama, was segregated in compliance with local statutes, Mrs. Roosevelt pointedly placed her chair half-way between the white and black delegates. In 1939, when the Daughters of the American Revolution barred a performance by black contralto Marian Anderson in Washington’s Constitution Hall, Mrs. Roosevelt and Harold Ickes arranged for an Easter Sunday concert by Anderson at the Lincoln Memorial.

The Roosevelt administration also courted women voters. Molly Dewson led the effort as head of the Democratic Party’s women’s division. In 1936, fifteen thousand women volunteers distributed flyers describing New Deal programs. However, Dewson did not push a specifically feminist agenda. The New Deal’s economic programs, she argued, benefited both sexes. FDR did, however, appoint the first woman cabinet member, the first woman ambassador, and a number of female federal judges. Through Dewson’s efforts, the 1936 Democratic platform committee had a fifty-fifty gender balance.

Despite such symbolic gestures and FDR’s appointment of a few blacks and women, racial and gender discrimination pervaded American society in the 1930s. Roosevelt, grappling with the depression, did relatively little to change things. That challenge would await a later time.

The Environment and the West

Environmental issues loomed large in the New Deal. While still in the New York Senate, FDR had sought logging regulation to protect wildlife. As president, for example, he strongly supported the Civilian Conservation Corps’ program of planting trees, thinning forests, and building hiking trails.

Soil conservation emerged as a major priority. The 1930s dust storms resulted not only from drought, but also from overgrazing and poor farming practices. For decades settlers had used ever more powerful machines to cultivate more land on the Great Plains. They had plowed up the native grasses that anchored the soil, exposing the topsoil to parching winds when drought struck. By the 1930s erosion had destroyed 9 million acres of farmland, with more in jeopardy.

In response, the Department of Agriculture’s Soil Conservation Service promoted contour plowing, crop rotation, and soil-strengthening grasses. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 restricted the grazing on public lands that had exacerbated the problem. In addition, TVA dams helped control the floods that worsened erosion in the Tennessee valley.

New Deal planners also promoted the national park movement. Washington state's Olympic, Virginia's Shenandoah, and California's Kings Canyon all became national parks in the 1930s. The administration also established some 160 new national wildlife refuges.

The wilderness-preservation movement gained momentum in the 1930s, supported by such groups as the Wilderness Society (1935), started by environmentalist Aldo Leopold and others, and the National Wildlife Federation (1936), funded by firearms makers eager to preserve hunting areas. Pressured by such groups, Congress began to set aside protected wilderness areas.

By later standards, the New Deal's environmental record was spotty. The decade's massive hydroelectric projects, while providing rural families with electricity, had serious ecological consequences. The Grand Coulee Dam, for example, destroyed salmon spawning on much of the Columbia River's tributary system. Other dams disrupted fragile ecosystems and the livelihoods of local residents, particularly Native American communities, who depended on them.

Viewed in context, however, the New Deal's environmental record remains impressive. While coping with a grave economic crisis, the Roosevelt administration focused on environmental issues in a way not seen since the Progressive Era, and not to be seen again for a generation.

The New Deal impact on the West was profound, especially because the federal government owned a third or more of the land in eleven western states. New Deal agencies and laws such as the Soil Conservation Service, the Taylor Grazing Act, and the Farm Security Administration (discussed shortly) set new rules for western agriculture, from prairie wheat fields and cattle ranges to California citrus groves and truck farms dependent on migrant labor.

The PWA and WPA built many large projects in the West, including thousands of public buildings, from courthouses and post offices to tourist facilities such as beautiful Timberline Lodge on Oregon's Mount Hood. Federal assistance also upgraded the highways linking the West to the rest of America, such as Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles.

Above all, the PWA in the West built dams—Grand Coulee (**KOO-lee**) and Bonneville (**BAHN-eh-vill**) on the Columbia, Shasta on the Sacramento, Glen Canyon on the Colorado, and others. Boulder (later Hoover) Dam on the Colorado, authorized by Congress in 1928, was completed by the PWA. Despite their ecological downside, these great undertakings—among the largest engineering projects in human history—supplied electric power to vast regions while also contributing to flood control, irrigation, and soil conservation. (Las Vegas owed its post-World War II emergence as a gambling and entertainment mecca to power from nearby Hoover Dam.)

A New Deal initiative particularly important to the West was Harold Ickes's National Resources Planning Board, established in 1934. This agency facilitated state and regional planning for such natural resources as water, soil, timber, and minerals. Despite the West's celebrated "rugged individualism," New Deal planning reshaped the public life of the region.

CHECKING IN

- The focus of the Second New Deal shifted to include social justice concerns and attacks on, rather than cooperation with, business.
- Enormous relief projects like those undertaken by the Works Progress Administration characterized the Second New Deal.
- Organized labor won a major victory with the passage of the National Labor Relations Act, which guaranteed collective bargaining and permitted closed shops.
- The Social Security Act set the framework for an expanded social-welfare state.
- In the 1936 election, a new Democratic coalition emerged that would dominate national politics for decades.
- FDR and Congress continued to drag their feet on racial matters, such as lynching, but they promoted conservation and reformed Indian policy.

THE NEW DEAL'S END STAGE, 1937–1939

How did the New Deal end?

Buoyed by his 1936 victory, Roosevelt proposed a controversial restructuring of the Supreme Court. After losing this fight, FDR confronted a stubborn recession and resurgent conservative opposition. With a few measures in 1937–1938, the New Deal ended.

FDR and the Supreme Court

In 1937, the Supreme Court comprised nine elderly men, four of them arch-conservatives who despised the New Deal. Joined by moderates, they had invalidated the NRA, the AAA, and progressive state laws. Roosevelt feared a similar fate for key measures of the Second New Deal, especially the Social Security Act.

In February 1937, FDR proposed a bill that would have allowed the president to appoint an additional Supreme Court member for each justice over age seventy, up to a total of six. Roosevelt blandly insisted that he was concerned about the heavy workload of aging justices, but his political motivation was obvious.

Congress and the public reacted with hostility. The Supreme Court's size (although unspecified in the Constitution) had become almost sacrosanct. Conservatives blasted FDR's "court-packing" scheme as a dangerous power grab. Even many Democrats disapproved. When the Senate voted down the scheme in July, FDR quietly dropped it.

But was it a defeat? Roosevelt's challenge to the Court, plus his 1936 electoral victory, sent powerful political signals that the justices heeded. In spring 1937, the Court upheld several New Deal measures, including the Wagner Act and a state minimum-wage law. Four conservative justices soon retired, enabling FDR to nominate successors of his choice and to create a judicial legacy that would long endure. In subsequent decades, the court proved much more receptive to business regulation and to the protection of individual rights as well as property rights.

The Roosevelt Recession

After showing signs of recovery, the economy dipped ominously in August 1937. Industrial production slumped, and soaring unemployment once again dominated the headlines. This "Roosevelt recession" resulted in part from federal policies that reduced consumer income. Social-security payroll taxes withdrew some \$2 billion from circulation. The Federal Reserve Board raised interest rates to forestall inflation, further contracting the money supply. FDR, meanwhile, concerned about mounting deficits, cut back the New Deal relief programs.

Echoing Hoover, FDR assured his cabinet, "Everything will work out . . . if we just sit tight." Meanwhile, however, some advisers embraced John Maynard Keynes's advocacy of deficit spending as the key to recovery. They warned of a political backlash if conditions worsened. Convinced, FDR in April 1938 authorized new relief spending. By late 1938, unemployment declined and industrial output increased. As late as 1939, however, more than 17 percent of the labor force remained jobless.



The Library of Congress

A Camera's-Eye View of Depression-Era America

This 1937 image by Dorothea Lange, a photographer with the Farm Security Administration, pictures migrants from the Texas dust bowl gathered at a roadside camp near Calipatria in southern California.

Farm Security Administration (FSA) Made low-interest loans to help tenant farmers and sharecroppers become more self-sufficient

Final Measures, Growing Opposition

Preoccupied by the Supreme Court fight, the recession, and menacing events abroad (covered in Chapter 25), FDR offered few domestic initiatives after 1936. Congress, however, enacted several significant measures. The Farm Tenancy Act of 1937 created the **Farm Security Administration (FSA)** to replace the Resettlement Administration. The FSA made low-interest loans to help tenant farmers and sharecroppers become farm owners. However, the FSA often rejected the poorest farmers' loan applications as too risky, weakening the program's impact.

The FSA operated camps offering clean, sanitary shelter and medical services to impoverished migrant farm workers. The FSA also commissioned gifted photographers to record the lives of tenants, migrants, and uprooted dust-bowl families. These FSA photographs helped shape a gritty documentary style that pervaded 1930s popular culture.

Other measures set precedents for the future. For example, the Housing Act of 1937 appropriated \$500 million for urban slum clearance and public housing. The

Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 banned child labor and established a national minimum wage (initially 40 cents an hour) and a maximum workweek of forty hours. Despite many loopholes, the law improved conditions for some and underscored the government's role in regulating abusive workplace conditions.

In a final stab at raising farm income, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 created a mechanism by which the government, in years of big harvests and low prices, would make loans to farmers and warehouse their surplus crops. When prices rose, farmers could sell these commodities and repay their loans. This complicated system set the framework of federal farm price support for decades. Overall, large-scale growers, not small family farms, benefited the most from subsidy payments.

The New Deal's slower pace after 1935 also reflected the rise of an anti-New Deal congressional coalition of Republicans and conservative southern Democrats. In 1937, this coalition rejected FDR's proposal to reorganize the executive branch. The conservative coalition also slashed relief appropriations, cut corporate taxes, and killed the Federal Theatre Project, a conservative target because of its alleged radicalism. Suspecting that FDR used WPA staff members for political purposes, conservatives in 1939 passed the Hatch Act, forbidding federal workers from participating in electoral campaigns.

Although FDR campaigned actively in 1938's midterm election, the Republicans gained heavily in the House and Senate, in addition to adding thirteen governorships. Roosevelt also tried to purge several prominent anti-New Deal Democratic senators in 1938, but his major targets all won reelection. Highlighting foreign affairs in his January 1939 State of the Union message, FDR proposed no new domestic measures and merely noted the need to "preserve our reforms." The New Deal was over.

Fair Labor Standards Act

Federal regulation setting a national minimum wage and a maximum workweek

CHECKING IN

- After reelection, FDR suffered a major setback in his "court-packing" scheme.
- An overconfident FDR reduced federal spending in 1937, leading to higher unemployment.
- A coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats challenged the New Deal and blocked substantial measures.
- By 1939, the administration's focus had shifted to foreign affairs.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL ACTION IN THE 1930s

How did the depression and the New Deal affect specific social groups in the United States?

American life in the 1930s involved more than politics. The depression affected everyone, including the jobless and their families, working women, and all age groups. For industrial workers, African-Americans, a growing Hispanic community, and Native Americans, the crisis brought hard times but also encouraged organized resistance to exploitation and brought new legislative initiatives.

The Depression's Psychological and Social Impact

The depression brought untold human suffering. Unemployment never fell below about 14 percent, and for much of the decade it ran considerably higher. A quarter of all farm families sought public or private assistance during the 1930s. Those who were employed often had to take jobs below their qualifications. For example, college alumni pumped gas, business-school graduates sold furniture, and a retired navy captain might only find work as a movie theater usher.

Psychologists described “unemployment shock”: jobless persons who walked the streets seeking work and then lay awake at night worrying. When their shoes wore out, cardboard or folded newspapers had to serve as replacements. Women’s magazines described low-cost meals and other budget-trimming strategies. As Caroline Bird wrote in *The Invisible Scar* (1966), the depression for many boiled down to “a dull misery in the bones.”

Senator Robert Wagner called the working woman in the depression years “the first orphan in the storm.” Indeed, for the 25 percent of women employed in 1930, the depression brought hard times. The female jobless rate exceeded 20 percent for much of the decade. Working women often took lower-paying jobs. Laid-off factory workers became waitresses. Jobless men competed with women even for such traditional “women’s work” as library posts and school teaching.

Married women workers endured harsh criticism. Although most worked out of economic necessity, they were accused of stealing men’s jobs. Even Labor Secretary Frances Perkins urged married women to leave the labor market so more men could work. School boards sometimes fired married women teachers.

Women workers also faced wage discrimination. In 1939, women teachers earned nearly 20 percent less than male teachers with comparable experience. Some NRA codes authorized lower pay for women. The minimum-wage provision of the Fair Labor Standards Act did not include the more than 2 million women who worked for wages in private households.

The late 1930s’ unionization drive had mixed effects on women workers. Some in the mass-production industries benefited, but the most heavily female sectors—textiles, clerical, service, and sales—resisted unionization. Despite the roadblocks, the percentage of wage-earning married women increased from under 12 percent to nearly 16 percent as married women took jobs to augment depressed family incomes.

The depression profoundly affected family life. The birthrate fell in the early 1930s as married couples postponed starting a family and birth-control devices became more readily available. The U.S. population in the 1930s grew by only 7 percent, in contrast to an average of 20 percent per decade from 1900 to 1930.

Family survival posed major challenges. Parents patched clothes, stretched food resources, and sought public assistance when necessary. In homes with a tradition of strong male authority, the husband’s loss of a job could prove devastating. Desertions increased, and the divorce rate spiked, hitting a then all-time high by 1940.

The depression spared neither old nor young. For example, bank failures wiped out the savings of older Americans. By 1935, a million citizens over sixty-five were on relief. As for young people, one observer compared them to a team of runners waiting for a starting gun that never sounded. High-school enrollment increased as many youths, lacking job prospects, stayed in school. The marriage rate declined as anxious young people postponed this step. Depression-era children wrote sad letters to Eleanor Roosevelt. A thirteen-year-old Arkansas girl wrote, “I have to stay out of school because I have no books or clothes to ware.”

Out of necessity, many families rediscovered traditional skills. They painted their own houses and repaired their own cars. Home baking and canning revived. Many would later recall the 1930s as a time of simple, inexpensive pleasures and neighborly sharing of scant resources.

For the neediest—among them blacks, Hispanics, and southern sharecroppers—the depression imposed added misery on poverty-blighted lives. In *Native Son* (1940), novelist Richard Wright vividly portrayed the desperate conditions of family life in Chicago's black slums. Yet hope survived. Emotional resilience, habits of mutual aid, and survival skills honed over the years helped poor families cope.

Industrial Workers Unionize

Of America's 7.7 million factory workers in 1930, most remained unorganized. Major industries such as steel, automobiles, and textiles resisted workers' attempts to unionize. The conservative mood of the 1920s further weakened the labor movement.

But hard times and a favorable government climate bred a new labor militancy in the 1930s. The Wagner Act's guarantee of workers' rights to organize energized some American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders. In November 1935 John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers (UMW) and Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, chafing at the AFL's slowness in organizing factory workers, started the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) within the AFL. CIO activists preached unionization in Pittsburgh's steel mills, Detroit's auto plants, and southern textile factories. Unlike the narrowly exclusive AFL unions, CIO unions welcomed all workers in a particular industry, regardless of race, gender, or skill level.

In 1936, a CIO-sponsored organizing committee geared up for a major strike to unionize the steel industry. (In fact, Lewis had already secretly negotiated a settlement with the head of U.S. Steel.) In March 1937, U.S. Steel recognized the union, raised wages, and accepted a forty-hour workweek. Other big steel companies followed, and soon four hundred thousand steelworkers signed union cards.

Other CIO organizers targeted General Motors, an anti-union stronghold. Their leader was a redheaded young autoworker and labor activist, Walter Reuther (**ROO**ther). In December 1936, employees at GM's two body plants in Flint, Michigan, stopped work and peacefully occupied the factories, paralyzing GM's production by their "sit-down strike." GM's management responded by calling in local police to harass the sit-down strikers, sending spies to union meetings, and threatening to fire strikers. A January 1937 showdown with the police at one of the body plants led to the formation of the Women's Emergency Brigade, whose members remained on twenty-four-hour alert for picket duty or to surround the plants in case of police raids.

GM asked the Roosevelt administration and Michigan's governor to send troops to expel the strikers by force. Both officials declined. Although FDR disapproved of the sit-down tactic, he refused to intervene. On February 11, GM signed a contract recognizing the United Automobile Workers (UAW). As Chrysler fell into line also, the UAW soon boasted more than four hundred thousand members. Unionization of the electrical and rubber industries advanced as well.

In 1938, the Committee for Industrial Organization left the AFL to become the **Congress of Industrial Organizations**, a 2-million-member association of industrial unions. In response, the AFL began to adapt to the changed nature of the labor force. Union membership shot up from under 3 million in 1933 to more than 8 million in 1941.

Congress of Industrial Organizations Counterpart of the AFL, but for unskilled industrial workers

Some big corporations resisted. Henry Ford hated unions, and his tough lieutenant Harry Bennett organized a squad of union-busting thugs to fight the UAW. In 1937, Bennett's men beat Walter Reuther and other UAW officials outside Ford's plant near Detroit. Not until 1941 did Ford yield to union pressure.

The Republic Steel Company, headed by a union hater named Tom Girdler, also dug in. Even after U.S. Steel signed with the CIO, Republic and other smaller companies, known collectively as "Little Steel," resisted. In May 1937, workers in twenty-seven Little Steel plants, including Republic's factory in South Chicago, walked off the job. On May 30, Memorial Day, strikers approached over 250 police officers guarding the plant. Someone threw a large stick at the police, who opened fire, killing four strikers and wounding scores. An investigative committee condemned the killings as "clearly avoidable." In 1941, under growing pressure, the Little Steel companies, including Republic, finally accepted the CIO union.

Another holdout was the textile industry, whose more than six hundred thousand workers, mostly in the South and 40 percent female, generally earned very low wages and had no recourse against autocratic bosses. In 1934, the AFL-affiliated United Textile Workers launched a new drive. Some four hundred thousand workers went on strike, but the mill owners fought back. Several strikers were killed and thousands arrested. The strike failed, and the 1930s ended with most textile workers still unorganized.

The union movement bypassed low-paid workers—domestics, farm workers, department store clerks, restaurant and laundry workers—who tended to be women, blacks, or recent immigrants. More than three-quarters of all nonfarm workers remained unorganized in 1940. Nonetheless, the unionization of many industrial workers represents one of the decade's most memorable achievements.

Why did powerful corporations yield to unionization after years of resistance? Workers' militancy and union organizers' tactical skill were crucial, but so was a changed government climate. Corporations had once routinely called on the government to help break strikes. Although this still happened in the 1930s, as in the textile-industry strike, the Roosevelt administration and state officials generally refused to play the role of strikebreaker. New Deal labor laws made clear that Washington would no longer automatically back management in labor disputes. Once corporate managers realized this, unionization often followed.

Organized labor's successes in the later 1930s concealed some complex tensions. A core of activists, including communists and socialists, led the unionizing drive. Most rank-and-file workers were not political radicals; however, once the CIO's militant minority showed the effectiveness of picket lines and sit-down strikes, workers signed up by the thousands. As they did, the radical organizers lost influence, and the unions became more conservative.



Labor Organizing, 1930s-Style

Walter Reuther (left) and Richard Frankensteen of the United Auto Workers appear here after their beating by Ford Motor Company security guards, Detroit, May 1937.

Blacks and Hispanic Americans Resist Racism and Exploitation

The depression also stirred activism within the African-American and Hispanic communities. Although black migration northward slowed in the 1930s, four hundred thousand southern blacks moved to northern cities in the decade. By 1940, nearly one-quarter of America's

12 million blacks lived in the urban North. Rural or urban, life was hard. Black tenant farmers and sharecroppers often faced eviction. Although some black industrial workers benefited from the CIO's nondiscriminatory policy, workplace racism remained a fact of life.

Over one hundred blacks died by lynching in the 1930s, and other miscarriages of justice continued, especially in the South. In 1931 an all-white jury in Scottsboro, Alabama, sentenced eight black youths to death on highly dubious charges of rape. In 1935, after heavy publicity and an aggressive defense, the Supreme Court ordered a new trial for the "Scottsboro Boys" because they had been denied legal counsel and blacks had been excluded from the jury. Five of the group were again convicted, however, and served long prison terms.

However, rising activism signaled changes ahead. The NAACP battled in courts and legislatures for voting rights and against lynching and segregation. The Urban League campaigned with boycotts and picket lines against businesses in black neighborhoods that employed only whites. In March 1935, hostility toward white-owned businesses in Harlem, fueled by anger over racism and joblessness, ignited a riot that caused an estimated \$200 million in damage and left three blacks dead.

The Communist Party publicized lynchings and racial discrimination, and supplied lawyers for the "Scottsboro Boys," as part of a depression-era recruitment effort in the black community. But despite a few notable recruits (including the novelist Richard Wright), few blacks joined the party.

Other minority groups also faced discrimination. For example, California continued to restrict land-ownership by Japanese-Americans. In 1934, Congress limited annual immigration from the Philippines (still a U.S. possession) to fifty—lower than that for any other nation. Congress also offered free travel "home" for Filipinos long settled in the United States.

The more than 2 million Hispanic-Americans faced trying times as well. Some were citizens with ancestral roots in the Southwest, but most were recent arrivals from Mexico or Caribbean islands, such as Cuba and Puerto Rico (a U.S. holding whose residents were and are American citizens). Whereas the Caribbean immigrants settled in East Coast cities, most Mexican newcomers worked as migratory agricultural laborers in the Southwest and elsewhere, or in midwestern steel or meatpacking plants.

As the depression deepened, Mexican-born residents faced mounting hostility. "Okies" fleeing the dust bowl competed for jobs with Hispanic farm workers. By 1937, over half of Arizona's cotton workers were out-of-staters who had supplanted Mexican-born laborers. With their migratory work patterns disrupted, Mexican-Americans poured into the barrios (Hispanic neighborhoods) of southwestern cities. Lacking work, half a million Mexicans returned to their native land in the 1930s. Although some did so voluntarily, immigration officials and local authorities expelled thousands. Mexican-American farm workers who

remained faced appalling conditions and near-starvation wages. A labor organization called the Confederación de Uniones de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos (Confederation of Unions of Mexican Workers and Farm Laborers) emerged from a 1933 strike by grape workers. More strikes erupted in 1935–1936 on farms across the state.

Organizations like the citrus-growers' marketing cooperative Sunkist fought the unions, sometimes with violence. In October 1933, bullets ripped into a cotton pickers' union hall in Pixley, California, killing two men and wounding others. Resisting intimidation, the strikers won a 20 percent pay increase, and others achieved a few successes, too. These strikes awakened at least some Americans to the plight of one of the nation's most exploited groups.

A New Deal for Native Americans

The 1930s also revived attention to the nation's 330,000 Native Americans, most of whom endured poverty, scant education, and poor health care. The Dawes Severalty Act of 1887 (see Chapter 17) dissolved the tribes as legal entities, allocated some tribal lands to individuals, and sold the rest. By the early 1930s, whites owned about two-thirds of the land that Native Americans had possessed in 1887. Although Indians gained voting rights in 1924, this did little to improve their lot.

In the 1920s a reform movement arose. One reformer, John Collier, who had lived among the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, founded the American Indian Defense Association in 1923 to reverse the Dawes Act approach and to revitalize traditional Indian life. Appointed commissioner of Indian affairs in 1933, Collier cadged funds from New Deal agencies to build schools, hospitals, and irrigation systems on Indian reservations and to preserve sites of cultural importance. The Civilian Conservation Corps employed twelve thousand Indian youths to work on projects on Indian lands.

Pursuing his vision, Collier drafted a bill to halt tribal land sales and restore the remaining unallocated lands to tribal control. Collier's bill also envisioned tribal councils with broad governing powers and required Indian schools to teach Native American history and handicrafts. The bill sparked opposition. Some Indian leaders criticized it as a plan to transform the reservations into living museums and to treat Native Americans as exotic and backward. Successful Indian property owners and entrepreneurs rejected the bill's tribalist assumptions. The bill did, indeed, reflect the idealism of well-meaning outsiders rather than the views of the nation's diverse Native American groups.

The **Indian Reorganization Act** of 1934, a compromise measure, halted the sale of tribal lands and enabled tribes to regain title to unallocated lands. But Congress scaled back Collier's proposals for tribal self-government and dropped measures to renew tribal culture. A majority of tribes approved the law, as required for it to take effect, but opinion was divided. Still, the restoration of tribes as legal entities laid the groundwork for later tribal business ventures as well as tribal lawsuits seeking to enforce long-violated treaty rights.

Indian Reorganization Act

Effort during the New Deal to restore the sovereignty and viability of Indian tribes

CHECKING IN

- The depression profoundly, and negatively, affected women in the work force.
- Families struggled to cope economically and psychologically.
- Now under government protection, industrial unions like the United Auto Workers organized and grew strong.
- Blacks, often the last hired and first fired, continued to face discrimination, injustice, and even violence.
- Migrant workers were hard hit by the depression as well as by competition from "Okies" and other displaced farmers.

THE AMERICAN CULTURAL SCENE IN THE 1930s

What key developments shaped American culture in the 1930s?

Hard times and the New Deal shaped American cultural life in the 1930s. While radio and the movies offered escapist fare, novelists, artists, playwrights, and photographers responded to the crisis as well. As the decade wore on, a more positive and affirmative tone in cultural expressions reflected both the renewed hope of the New Deal and apprehension about events abroad.

Avenues of Escape: Radio and the Movies

The standardization of mass culture continued in the 1930s. Each evening millions of Americans gathered around their radios to listen to news, musical programs, and comedy shows. Radio humor flourished when the real world was grim.

So, too, did the fifteen-minute afternoon dramas known as soap operas (for the soap companies that sponsored them). Despite their assembly-line quality, these daily dollops of romance and melodrama won a devoted audience, mostly housewives. Identifying with the troubled radio heroines, female listeners gained at least temporary escape from their own difficulties. As one put it, “I can get through the day better when I hear they have sorrows, too.”

The movies were also extremely popular, and most people could still afford the twenty-five-cent admission. In 1939, 65 percent of Americans went to the movies at least once a week. Films of the early 1930s like *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932) captured the grimness of the early depression. The popular Marx Brothers movies reflected the uncertainty of the Hoover years. In comedies like *Animal Crackers* (1930) and *Duck Soup* (1933), these vaudeville troupers of German-Jewish immigrant origins ridiculed authority and satirized the established order.

After Roosevelt took office, Warner Brothers studio (with close ties to the administration) made several topical films that presented the New Deal in a favorable light. These included *Wild Boys of the Road* (1933), about unemployed youth; *Massacre* (1934), on the mistreatment of Indians; and *Black Fury* (1935), dealing with striking coal miners.

Early thirties' gangster movies, inspired by real-life criminals like Al Capone, presented a different style of film realism. Films like *Little Caesar* (1930) and *The Public Enemy* (1931) offered gritty images of depression America: menacing streets, forbidding industrial sites, and gunfights between rival gangs. When civic groups protested the glorification of crime, Hollywood made police and “G-men” (FBI agents) the heroes, while retaining the violence. The movie gangsters played by Edward G. Robinson and James Cagney, variants of the Horatio Alger hero battling adversity, appealed to depression-era moviegoers.

Above all, Hollywood offered escape from depression-era realities. Musicals such as *Gold Diggers* in 1933 (with its theme song, “We’re in the Money”) offered dancing, music, and cheerful plots involving the triumph of pluck over adversity. In Frank Capra’s *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936) and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), virtuous heroes representing “the people” vanquish entrenched interests. When color movies arrived in the late 1930s, they seemed an omen of better times ahead.

African-Americans appeared in 1930s' movies, if at all, mostly as stereotypes: the scatterbrained maid in *Gone with the Wind* (1939), the indulgent house servant in *The Little Colonel* (1935), or the slow-witted “Stepin Fetchit” played in many movies by black actor Lincoln Perry, for example. In representing women, Hollywood offered mixed messages. While some 1930s' movie heroines found fulfillment in marriage and domesticity, other films challenged the stereotype. Katharine Hepburn portrayed independent-minded women in such films as *Spitfire* (1934) and *A Woman Rebels* (1936). Similarly, Mae West, brassy and openly sexual, mocked conventional stereotypes in *I'm No Angel* (1933) and other 1930s hits.

The Later 1930s: Opposing Fascism, Reaffirming Traditional Values

The 1930s ended on a cautiously upbeat note. America had survived the depression. The social fabric remained whole; revolution had not come. As other societies collapsed into dictatorships, U.S. democracy endured. Writers, composers, and other cultural creators reflected the changed mood.

Popular Front Coalition of liberal, communist elements against fascism

A movement known as the **Popular Front** influenced this shift. In 1935 Russian dictator Joseph Stalin (**STAHL-in**), fearing attack by Nazi (**NAHT-zee**) Germany, called for a worldwide alliance, or Popular Front, against Adolf Hitler and his Italian ally in fascism (**FASH-ism**), Benito Mussolini (**ben-EE-toh moos-soh-LEE-nee**). Parroting the new Soviet line, U.S. communists who in the early 1930s had attacked FDR and the New Deal now praised Roosevelt and summoned writers and intellectuals to the anti-fascist cause. Many noncommunists, alarmed by developments in Europe, responded.

The high-water mark of the Popular Front came during the Spanish Civil War of 1936–1939. In July 1936, Spanish fascist general Francisco Franco revolted against Spain's legally elected left-wing government. With military aid from Hitler and Mussolini, Franco won backing from Spanish monarchists, landowners, and industrialists, and from the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

In America, writers, artists, and intellectuals who backed the Popular Front rallied to support the anti-Franco Spanish Loyalists (those loyal to the elected government). The novelist Ernest Hemingway, who visited Spain in 1936–1937, expressed a newfound sense of worthwhile purpose in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), the story of a young American volunteer who dies while fighting with the Loyalists.

The Popular Front collapsed in August 1939 when the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany signed a nonaggression pact. Overnight, enthusiasm for joining with communists under the “antifascism” banner faded. But while it lasted, the Popular Front influenced U.S. culture and alerted Americans to threatening events abroad.

The New Deal's achievements also contributed to the cultural shift of the later 1930s. The satire and cynicism of the 1920s and early 1930s yielded to a more hopeful view of grass-roots America. In John Steinbeck's best-selling novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), an uprooted dust-bowl family, the Joads, make their difficult way from Oklahoma to California, revealing the strength shown by ordinary people in depression America. As Ma Joad tells her son Tom, “They ain't gonna wipe us out. Why, we're the people—we go on.”

In 1936 writer James Agee and photographer Walker Evans spent weeks living with Alabama sharecroppers to research a magazine article. The result was *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941). Enhanced by Evans's unforgettable photographs, Agee's masterpiece evoked the strength and decency of those living on society's margins.

On the stage, Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* (1938) lovingly portrayed early twentieth-century life in a New England town. Composers also reflected this spirit of cultural nationalism. In *Billy the Kid* (1938) and other compositions, Aaron Copland drew upon American legends and folk melodies. George Gershwin adapted a popular 1920s play about black street life in Charleston, South Carolina, for his opera *Porgy and Bess* (1935).

Jazz gained popularity thanks to swing, a danceable style popularized by the big bands of Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and others. White clarinetist Benny Goodman challenged the color line in jazz, including black musicians in his orchestra. A turning point in the acceptance of jazz came in 1938, when Goodman's band performed at New York's Carnegie Hall, a citadel of high culture.

The later 1930s also saw a heightened interest in regional literature, painting, and folk art. Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) portrayed a black woman's search for fulfillment in rural Florida. In addition, William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) continued the saga of his mythic Yoknapatawpha County in Mississippi. Painters Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, John Steuart Curry of Kansas, and Iowa's Grant Wood explored traditional and regional themes in their work.

Galleries displayed folk paintings, Amish quilts, and New England weather vanes. A 1939 show at New York's Museum of Modern Art featured seventy-nine-year-old Anna "Grandma" Moses of Hoosick Falls, New York, whose memory paintings of her farm girlhood enjoyed great popularity.

The surge of cultural nationalism heightened interest in American history. Visitors flocked to historical re-creations such as Henry Ford's Greenfield Village near Detroit and Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. Texans restored the Alamo in San Antonio, the "Cradle of Texas Liberty." Historical novels like Margaret Mitchell's Civil War epic *Gone with the Wind* (1936) became best sellers. These restorations and fictions often distorted history. Colonial Williamsburg and Mitchell's novel downplayed or romanticized slavery. And "Texas Liberty" resonated differently for the state's Hispanic, African-American, and Indian peoples than it did for the white patriotic organizations that venerated the Alamo.

Streamlining and a World's Fair: Corporate America's Utopian Vision

A design style called streamlining also shaped the visual culture of the late 1930s. This style originated in the 1920s when industrial designers, inspired by the airplane, introduced smoothly flowing curves into the design of commercial products. Streamlining appealed to consumers—a

vital business consideration during the depression. When Sears Roebuck streamlined its Coldspot refrigerators, sales surged. As products ranging from house trailers to pencil sharpeners and cigarette lighters emerged in sleek new forms, streamlining helped corporate America rebuild its image and present itself as the benevolent shaper of a better future.

Under the theme "The World of Tomorrow," the 1939 New York World's Fair represented the high point of the streamlining vogue and corporate America's public-relations blitz. Inside the fair's hallmark Perisphere, a giant globe, visitors found "Democracity," a revolving diorama showing a harmonious city of the future.

"The World of Tomorrow" was also a technological utopia, filled with such wonders as televisions and automatic dishwashers. The hit of the fair was General

CHECKING IN

- During the depression, radio and the movies offered escapist fare to millions of Americans.
- The Popular Front briefly linked noncommunist and communist intellectuals.
- A positive mood emerged by the late 1930s in works like *The Grapes of Wrath*.
- The success of the New Deal and looming international problems fed into a rising sense of cultural nationalism.
- By 1939, Americans looked to the future with optimism, embodied in the World's Fair, but their optimism was mixed with anxiety about world affairs.

Motors' Futurama, which gave visitors a vision of the United States in the distant year 1960—a nation of complex multilane highways with stacked interchanges. A brilliant public-relations investment, Futurama built support for the interstate highway system that would soon become a reality. Forget the depression and the bitter auto-workers' strike, GM's exhibit seemed to whisper; behold the exciting future we are preparing for you.

The fair epitomized hopefulness stirring in America as the 1930s ended, but the hopefulness was tinged with fear, as danger loomed beyond the seas. The anxiety triggered by the menacing world situation surfaced on October 31, 1938, when CBS Radio aired an adaptation of H. G. Wells's science fiction story *War of the Worlds*, directed by Orson Welles. In realistic detail, the broadcast reported the landing of a spaceship in New Jersey and the advance of aliens with deadly ray guns toward New York. The show sparked a panic as horrified listeners believed the end was at hand. Beneath the terror lay a more rational fear: of approaching war. For a decade, as America battled the depression, the international situation steadily worsened. By October 1938, another European war loomed on the horizon.

The panic triggered by Orson Welles's Halloween prank quickly faded, but the anxieties aroused by the all-too-real dangers abroad only escalated. By the time the New York World's Fair offered its hopeful vision of the future, the actual world of 1939 looked bleak indeed.

Chapter Summary

What caused the Great Depression, and how did President Hoover respond? (page 579)

Hoover's emphasis on voluntarism proved inadequate to the magnitude of problems caused by the Great Depression, but he would not move beyond that to extend direct aid to people. Disenchanted Americans sneered at "Hoover-villes" and were appalled by the way the administration responded to the bonus march.

What strategy guided the early New Deal, and what problems and challenges arose in 1934–1935? (page 583)

Initially, Roosevelt welcomed big business in his depression-fighting coalition. The first hundred days of FDR's term saw passage of measures intended to achieve industrial recovery, agricultural recovery, and short-term relief: the Federal Emergency Relief Act, the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. The New Deal also featured reform measures, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

KEY TERMS

Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) (p. 581)
 Eleanor Roosevelt (p. 583)
 Frances Perkins (p. 583)
 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) (p. 585)
 Federal Emergency Relief Act (p. 585)
 Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) (p. 585)
 National Recovery Administration (NRA) (p. 586)
 Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) (p. 586)
 Harry Hopkins (p. 587)

What key measures and setbacks marked the course of the New Deal from 1935 on? (page 589)

From 1935 on, during the so-called Second New Deal, federal policies became more concerned with social justice and less interested in cooperating with business. Relief projects, such as those of the Works Progress Administration, gave jobs to millions of people, and the National Labor Relations Act opened the way for the success of industrial unionization. The Social Security Act established the framework for the modern social-welfare state. FDR's smashing reelection victory in 1936 solidified the Democratic coalition he had forged, including the white South, farmers, urban ethnics, union members, and African-Americans.

How did the New Deal end? (page 595)

The failure of FDR's "court-packing" scheme and the arrival of a recession in 1937 slowed the momentum of the New Deal, and a congressional coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats made passage of major legislation virtually impossible. The rise of fascism and Nazism in Europe, and Japanese aggression in Asia, took center stage. By 1938, facing rising conservative opposition and menaces abroad, the New Deal's reformist energies faded.

How did the depression and the New Deal affect specific social groups in the United States? (page 597)

Families struggled economically and psychologically during the depression. Industrial workers, with the backing of the administration, organized unions in previously unassailable sectors, such as automobiles. Women and African-Americans continued to face discrimination, while migrant workers were also hard hit. For Native Americans, New Deal legislation restored tribes' legal status, laying the groundwork for future enterprises and treaty claims.

What key developments shaped American culture in the 1930s? (page 603)

American culture in the 1930s reflected the decade's economic and social realities. While the movies and radio offered diversion, writers, painters, and other cultural creators initially expressed despair and cynicism over capitalism's failure. But as New Deal programs assisted writers and artists, and as foreign threats loomed in the later 1930s, the cultural climate grew more patriotic and affirmative.

KEY TERMS continued

Works Progress Administration (WPA) (p. 589)

National Labor Relations Act (p. 590)

Social Security Act (p. 591)

Farm Security Administration (FSA) (p. 596)

Fair Labor Standards Act (p. 597)

Congress of Industrial Organizations (p. 599)

Indian Reorganization Act (p. 602)

Popular Front (p. 604)



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

Americans and a World in Crisis

CHAPTER 25

1933–1945



Okinawa, 1945

W. Eugene Smith/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images

CHAPTER PREVIEW

The United States in a Menacing World, 1933–1939

How did the American people and government respond to the international crises of the 1930s?

Into the Storm, 1939–1941

What drew the United States into World War II?

America Mobilizes for War

How did war mobilization transform the American economy and government?

The Battlefield, 1942–1944

What were the major aspects of Allied military strategy in Europe and Asia?

War and American Society

What were the major effects of World War II on American society, including minorities and women?

Triumph and Tragedy, 1945

What new issues did the U.S. government confront in defeating Germany and Japan in 1945?

To most Americans, World War II was “the good war.” Unlike the nations of Asia and Europe, the United States suffered no invasion of its homeland, no bombing of its cities, and no mass killing of its civilians. The war lifted the United States out of the Great Depression and propelled many into the middle class, and it gave unprecedented opportunities to millions of minorities and women. That “Good War,” however, had little to do with E. B. Sledge’s experience fighting in the South Pacific.

E. B. Sledge’s harrowing wartime experiences drove him to write a memoir of unrelenting horror, *With the Old Breed*. Describing the battles of Peleliu and Okinawa, Sledge depicts a brutal landscape of

war without mercy. He once saw a fellow marine use a knife to try to extract the gold teeth of a wounded Japanese soldier, even as the man thrashed in pain. On Peleliu, unable to reclaim the bodies of his comrades from the battlefield, he watched helplessly as buddies oozed into a wasteland of mud and excreta, land crabs feeding on them. On Okinawa's Half Moon Hill, he dreamed that the decomposed bodies of marines sprawled about him slowly rose, unblinkingly stared at him, and said, "It is over for us who are dead, but you must struggle, and will carry the memories all your life."

The wartime experiences of few Americans matched those of Sledge. Yet World War II fundamentally changed national institutions and transformed individual behavior. The war was a watershed, separating what had come before from what would become the dominant patterns of postwar life. It created a new world order that left the United States at the pinnacle of its power and sowed the seeds of a postwar crisis. It was indeed, in Eleanor Roosevelt's words, "no ordinary time."

THE UNITED STATES IN A MENACING WORLD, 1933–1939

How did the American people and government respond to the international crises of the 1930s?

Apart from improving relations with Latin America, the early administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) remained largely aloof from the crises in the world. Americans reacted ambivalently as Italy, Germany, and Japan grew more aggressive. Millions of Americans, determined not to stumble into war again, supported neutrality. Only a minority wanted the United States to help embattled democracies abroad. All the while, the world slid toward the precipice.

Nationalism and the Good Neighbor

President Roosevelt at first put American economic interests above all else and showed little interest in free trade or international economic cooperation. He did, however, commit himself to an internationalist approach in Latin America, where bitterness over decades of "Yankee imperialism" ran high. FDR announced a **"Good Neighbor" policy**, renouncing any nation's right to intervene in the affairs of another. To that end, Roosevelt withdrew the last U.S. troops from Haiti and the Dominican Republic, and terminated the Platt Amendment, which had given the United States its right to intervene in Cuba since 1901.

Cuba and Mexico provided major tests of the Good Neighbor policy. In Cuba, an economic crisis in 1933 brought to power a leftist regime that the United States opposed. Instead of sending in the marines, the United States provided indirect aid to a conservative revolt led by Fulgencio Batista in 1934 that overthrew the radical government. American economic assistance would then allow Batista to retain power until his overthrow by Fidel Castro in 1959. In Mexico, a reform government came to power in 1936 and promptly nationalized several oil companies owned by U.S. and British corporations. While insisting on fair compensation, the United States refrained from military intervention.

"Good Neighbor" policy

FDR's less interventionist policy toward Latin America

Chronology



1931–1932	Japan invades Manchuria
1933	Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany and assumes dictatorial powers
1934–1936	Nye Committee investigations
1935–1937	Neutrality Acts
1937	Japan invades China
1938	Germany annexes Austria; Munich Pact gives Sudetenland to Germany; <i>Kristallnacht</i> , night of Nazi terror against German and Austrian Jews
1939	Nazi-Soviet Pact; Germany invades Poland; World War II begins
1940	Germany conquers most of western Europe; Germany, Italy, and Japan sign the Tripartite Pact; Selective Service Act; Franklin Roosevelt elected to an unprecedented third term
1941	Lend-Lease Act; Roosevelt establishes the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC); Germany invades the Soviet Union; Japan attacks Pearl Harbor; the United States enters World War II; War Powers Act
1942	Battles of Coral Sea and Midway halt Japanese offensive; internment of Japanese-Americans; Revenue Act expands graduated income-tax system; Allies invade North Africa (Operation TORCH); first successful atomic chain reaction; CORE founded
1943	Soviet victory in Battle of Stalingrad; coal miners strike; Smith-Connally War Labor Disputes Act; Detroit and Los Angeles race riots; Allied invasion of Italy; Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin meet in Tehran
1944	Allied invasion of France (Operation Overlord); U.S. forces invade the Philippines; Roosevelt wins fourth term; Battle of the Bulge
1945	Yalta Conference; Battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa; Roosevelt dies; Harry S. Truman becomes president; Germany surrenders; Truman, Churchill, and Stalin meet in Potsdam; United States drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Japan surrenders

Although the Good Neighbor policy did not end U.S. interference in Latin American affairs, it did substitute economic leverage for heavy-handed intervention. The better relations fostered by FDR would help the United States pursue hemispheric solidarity in World War II, and later in the Cold War.

The Rise of Aggressive States in Europe and Asia

Benito Mussolini Leader of Italy; founder of fascism

Adolf Hitler Dictatorial leader of resurgent, expansionist Germany

Nazi party Hitler's political party; stressed fascism and anti-Semitism

Meanwhile, powerful forces raged across much of the world. As early as 1922, Italy's economic problems and social unrest had opened the way for **Benito Mussolini** and his Fascist party to seize power in Rome. The regime swiftly suppressed dissent and imposed one-party rule.

The rise of **Adolf Hitler** in Germany proved more menacing. Hitler's National Socialist party, or **Nazi party**, had gained broad support as a result of the depression and German resentment of the harsh Versailles treaty, and Hitler became Germany's chancellor in January 1933. Crushing opponents and rivals, Hitler imposed a brutal dictatorship on Germany and began a program to purify it of Jews—whom he considered an “inferior race” responsible for Germany's defeat in World War I.

Violating the Versailles treaty, Hitler began rearming Germany in 1935. A year later, German troops reoccupied the Rhineland, a region between the

Rhine River and France specifically demilitarized by the Versailles treaty. In 1938, Hitler proclaimed an *Anschluss* (**ON-shlooss**) (union) between Austria and Germany. Meanwhile, Mussolini, intent on building an empire in Africa, invaded Ethiopia in 1935. London, Paris, and Washington murmured their disapproval but took no action. An emboldened Hitler then claimed Germany's right to the Sudetenland (**soo-DATE-un-land**), a part of neighboring Czechoslovakia (**check-oh-sloh-VAH-kee-uh**) containing 3 million ethnic Germans. British prime minister Neville Chamberlain and his French counterpart, insisting that their countries could not endure another war like that of 1914–1918, yielded to Hitler's demands in return for his assurance that Germany had no further territorial ambitions—a policy dubbed **appeasement**—at a conference in Munich in September 1938.

In Tokyo, meanwhile, nationalistic militarists gained control of the government and launched a fateful course of expansion, sending troops into the northern Chinese province of Manchuria in 1931. Japan then initiated a full-scale war against China in 1937 and soon controlled key parts of that nation.

appeasement British policy to avoid war by giving in to German territorial demands for control of Czechoslovakia

The American Mood: No More War

The feeble American response reflected the people's belief that the decision to go to war in 1917 had been a ghastly mistake. This conviction was rooted in the nation's isolationist tradition as well as in its desire to have the government focus on the problems

of the depression, not foreign affairs. A 1934–1936 Senate investigation headed by Republican Gerald P. Nye of North Dakota concluded that war profiteers, whom it called “merchants of death,” had tricked the United States into World War I for financial gain. A January 1937 poll showed that 70 percent of the people believed that the United States should have stayed out of World War I.

By the mid-1930s an overwhelming majority of Americans thought that the “mistake” of intervention should not be repeated. In 1935–1937, a series of **Neutrality Acts** echoed the longing for peace. To prevent a repetition of 1917, these measures outlawed arms sales and loans to nations at war and forbade Americans to travel on the ships of belligerent powers.

With the public firmly isolationist and American companies like IBM heavily invested in German industry, confrontation with fascism came solely in sports. At the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, African-American track star Jesse Owens

Neutrality Acts Laws passed in the mid-1930s to keep the United States out of any European wars



Thomas D. Harvey/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images

Isolationism vs. Interventionism

In front of the White House in 1941, an American soldier grabs a sign from an isolationist picketing against the United States entering the war in Europe. Isolationists ran the gamut from pacifists who opposed all wars, to progressives who feared the growth of business and centralized power, to ultrarightists who sympathized with fascism or shared Hitler's anti-Semitism.

made a mockery of Nazi theories of racial superiority by winning four gold medals. When the black American Joe Louis knocked out German Max Schmeling in the first round of their world heavyweight championship bout in 1938, Americans cheered—but still opposed any policy that might involve them in war.

The Gathering Storm: 1938–1939

The interlude of reduced tension that followed the Munich Pact proved tragically brief. “Peace in our time” lasted a mere 5½ months. At 6:00 A.M. on March 15, 1939, Nazi troops thundered across the border into Czechoslovakia. By evening the Nazi flag flew over the Czech capital of Prague (*prahg*). Five months later, the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact gave Hitler a green light to invade Poland. When Hitler’s troops attacked Poland in September, Britain and France declared war on Germany. World War II had begun.

Although isolationist sentiment remained strong in the United States, opinion began to shift. After the fall of Czechoslovakia, Roosevelt called for actions “short of war” to demonstrate America’s will to check fascism, and he asked Hitler and Mussolini to pledge no further aggression. A jeering Hitler ridiculed FDR’s message, while in Rome Mussolini mocked Roosevelt’s physical disability, joking that the president’s paralysis must have reached his brain.

Roosevelt, however, did more than send messages. In October 1938, he asked Congress for a \$300 million military appropriation; in November, he instructed the Army Air Corps to plan for an annual production of twenty thousand planes; in January 1939, he submitted a \$1.3 billion defense budget. Hitler and Mussolini, he said, were “two madmen” who “respect force and force alone.”

America and the Jewish Refugees

Hitler and the Nazis translated their hatred of Jews into official policy. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 stripped Jews of the rights of German citizenship, and increased restrictions on Jews in all spheres of German educational, social, and economic life. This campaign of hatred reached a violent crescendo on November 9–10, 1938, when the Nazis unleashed *Kristallnacht* (*cris-TAHL-nocked*) (Night of the Broken Glass), a frenzy of arson, destruction, and looting against Jews throughout Germany.

At this point, no one could mistake Hitler’s malignant intent. Jews, who had been leaving Germany since 1933, streamed out by the tens of thousands, seeking haven. Between 1933 and 1938, sixty thousand fled to the United States. Most Americans condemned the Jews’ persecution, but only a minority favored admitting more refugees. Congress rejected all efforts to liberalize the immigration law, with its discriminatory quotas, and FDR did little to translate his sympathy for the Jews into effective policies.

The consequences of such attitudes became clear in June 1939, when the *St. Louis*, a German liner jammed with 950 Jewish refugees, asked permission to put its passengers ashore at Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Immigration officials refused this request and, according to the *New York Times*, a Coast Guard cutter stood by “to prevent possible attempts by refugees to jump

CHECKING IN

- FDR adopted the Good Neighbor policy toward Latin America.
- Mussolini established a fascist state in Italy in 1922; Hitler and the Nazis took over Germany in 1933 and pursued an expansionist course in Europe; Japan became increasingly militaristic and aggressive in Asia.
- Americans generally remained isolationist; the Neutrality Acts reflected this sentiment.
- When war erupted in Europe, FDR sought increased military funding and ways to evade the Neutrality Acts.
- The American people and government basically ignored the plight of Jews attempting to flee Hitler.

off and swim ashore.” The *St. Louis* turned slowly away from the lights of America and sailed back to Germany, where most of its passengers would die from Nazi brutality.

INTO THE STORM, 1939–1941

What drew the United States into World War II?

Following the lightning German victories in western Europe in the spring of 1940, President Roosevelt’s policy of neutrality gave way to a policy of economic intervention. He knew that extending aid to those resisting aggression by the so-called Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis, as well as his toughening conduct toward Germany and Japan, could, as he said, “push” the United States into the crisis of worldwide war. Japan’s attack on the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor provided the final push.

The European War

The war in Europe began on September 1, 1939, as Nazi armies poured into Poland and the *Luftwaffe* (**LOOFT-vah-feh**) (German air force) devastated Polish cities. Two days later, Britain and France, honoring commitments to Poland, declared war on Germany. Although FDR invoked the Neutrality Acts, he would not ask Americans to be impartial in thought and deed.

Tailoring his actions to the public mood, which favored both preventing a Nazi victory and staying out of war, FDR persuaded Congress in November to amend the Neutrality Acts to allow the belligerents to purchase weapons from the United States if they paid cash and carried the arms away in their own ships. But “cash-and-carry” did not stop the Nazis. In spring 1940 Hitler unleashed blitzkrieg (**BLITS-kreeg**) (lightning war) against western Europe; the Nazi Wehrmacht (**VAIR-mokt**) (war machine) swept all the way to the English Channel in a scant two months. In early June the British evacuated most of their army, but none of its equipment, from France. On June 22 France surrendered.

Hitler then turned his fury against Great Britain, terror-bombing British cities in hopes of forcing a surrender or, failing that, preparing the ground for a cross-channel invasion. With thousands of civilians killed or wounded and much of London in smoking ruins, Prime Minister **Winston Churchill** pleaded for American aid.

Winston Churchill British wartime Prime Minister; close friend of FDR; staunch ally of the United States

From Isolation to Intervention

In the United States in 1940, news of the “Battle of Britain” competed with speculation about whether FDR would break with tradition and run for an unprecedented third term. Not until the eve of the Democrats’ July convention did he reveal that, given the world crisis, he would consent to a “draft” from his party. The Axis threat clinched his renomination and similarly led the Republicans to nominate Wendell Willkie of Indiana, an all-out internationalist who championed greater aid to Britain.

Roosevelt adroitly played the role of a national leader too busy with defense and diplomacy to engage in partisan politics. He appointed Republicans

Henry Stimson and Frank Knox as secretaries of war and the navy. Roosevelt approved a peacetime draft and a dramatic increase in defense funding. In September, he engineered a “destroyers-for-bases” swap with England, sending fifty vintage American ships to Britain in exchange for leases on British air and naval bases in the Western Hemisphere.

These moves infuriated isolationists, particularly the America First Committee. Largely financed by Henry Ford, and featuring Charles Lindbergh as its most popular speaker, the AFC insisted “Fortress America” could stand alone. But a majority of Americans, reassured by the president’s promise never to “send an American boy to fight in a foreign war,” chose Roosevelt for a third term.

Roosevelt now called on the United States to become “the arsenal of democracy.” He proposed a “**lend-lease**” program to supply war materiel to the cash-strapped British. Despite bitter opposition by the isolationists, Congress approved the lend-lease program in March 1941, and supplies began to flow across the Atlantic. When Hitler’s armies invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, FDR dispatched supplies to the Soviets, despite American hostility toward communism. To defeat Hitler, FDR said, “I would hold hands with the Devil.”

To counter the menace of German submarines that threatened to choke the transatlantic supply line, Roosevelt in mid-1941 authorized the U.S. Navy to convoy British ships, with orders to destroy enemy ships if necessary. In August, he met with Churchill aboard a warship off Newfoundland. They issued a statement, known as the **Atlantic Charter**, that condemned aggression, affirmed national self-determination, and endorsed the principles of collective security, free trade, and disarmament. After a German submarine fired at an American destroyer in September, Roosevelt authorized naval patrols to shoot on sight all Axis vessels operating in the western Atlantic.

Now on a collision course with Germany, Roosevelt persuaded Congress in November to permit the arming of merchant ships and to allow the transport of lend-lease supplies to belligerent ports in war zones. Unprepared for a major war, America was nevertheless fighting a limited one, and full-scale hostilities seemed imminent.

“lend-lease” Program to “loan” war materiel to allies to avoid Neutrality Acts

Atlantic Charter World War II equivalent of Wilson’s Fourteen Points; signed by FDR and Churchill

Pearl Harbor and the Coming of War

Hitler’s triumphs in western Europe encouraged Japan to expand farther into Asia. However, the United States opposed Japanese expansion virtually alone. Seeing Germany as America’s primary threat, the Roosevelt administration tried to apply enough pressure to deter the Japanese without provoking Tokyo to war before the United States had built the “two-ocean navy” authorized by Congress in 1940.

The Japanese, too, hoped to avoid war, but they would not compromise their desire to create the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (an empire embracing much of China, Southeast Asia, and the western Pacific). Japan saw America’s stand as a ploy to block its rise to power, and Americans viewed Japan’s talk of legitimate national aspirations as a smoke screen to cloak aggression. Decades of “yellow-peril” propaganda had hardened U.S. attitudes toward Japan, and even those who were isolationist toward Europe tended to be interventionist toward Asia.

The two nations became locked in a deadly dance. In 1940, believing that economic coercion would force the Japanese out of China, the United States ended a

long-standing trade treaty with Japan and banned the sale of aviation fuel and scrap metal to it. Tokyo responded by occupying northern Indochina, a French colony, and signing the Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy in September, creating a military alliance, the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis, that required each government to help the others in the event of a U.S. attack.

When the Japanese then overran the rest of Indochina in July 1941, Roosevelt froze all Japanese assets in the United States and clamped a total embargo on trade with Japan. Tokyo had two choices: submit to the United States to gain a resumption of trade or conquer new lands to obtain vital resources. In October, expansionist war minister General Hideki Tojo (**hih-DEH-kee TOH-joh**) became Japan's prime minister. Tojo set the first week in December as the deadline for a preemptive strike if the United States did not yield. By late November, U.S. intelligence—after deciphering Japan's top diplomatic code—alerted the Roosevelt administration that war was imminent. Eleventh-hour negotiations under way in Washington made no headway, and warnings went out to all commanders in the Pacific advising them of the threat of an imminent Japanese attack. U.S. officials believed that the Japanese would strike British or Dutch possessions or even the Philippines—but the Japanese gambled on a knockout punch, hoping to destroy the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor and compel Roosevelt, preoccupied with Germany, to seek accommodation with Japan.

Waves of Japanese dive-bombers and torpedo planes thundered across Hawaii's island of Oahu Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, bombing ships at anchor in Pearl Harbor and strafing planes parked wingtip to wingtip at nearby air bases. In less than three hours, eight battleships, three light cruisers, and two destroyers had been sunk or crippled, and 360 aircraft were destroyed or damaged. The attack killed more than twenty-four hundred Americans and opened the way for Japan's advance toward Australia. Americans had underestimated the resourcefulness, skill, and daring of the Japanese. At the same time, Japanese leaders erred in counting on a paralyzing blow at Pearl Harbor. That miscalculation assured the United States would become an aroused and united nation determined to avenge the attack.

Roosevelt called December 7 a “date which will live in infamy.” On December 8, Congress declared war on Japan. (The sole dissenter was Montana's Jeannette Rankin, who had also cast a nay vote against U.S. entry into WWI.) Three days later, Hitler declared war on the “half Judaized and the other half Negrified” Americans, and Mussolini followed suit. Congress immediately reciprocated without a dissenting vote. America faced a global war that it was not ready to fight.

After Pearl Harbor, U-boats wreaked havoc in the North Atlantic and prowled the Caribbean and the East Coast of the United States. Every twenty-four hours, five more Allied vessels went to the bottom. By the end of 1942, U-boat “wolf packs” destroyed more than a thousand Allied ships, offsetting the pace of American ship production. The United States was losing the battle of the Atlantic.

The war news from Europe and Africa was, as Roosevelt admitted, “all bad.” Hitler's rule covered an enormous swath of territory, from the outskirts of Moscow, deep in Russia, to the Pyrenees (**PEER-eh-nees**) on the French-Spanish border, and from northern Norway to the Libyan (**LIB-ee-un**) desert. In spring 1942, Nazi armies inflicted more than

CHECKING IN

- The war in Europe went badly for a defeated France and a battered Britain.
- FDR stepped up the American response to the war with cash-and-carry, lend-lease, and naval action programs against German U-boats.
- Isolationism remained strong.
- The Atlantic Charter summed up the Anglo-American vision of a harmonious postwar world.
- Japanese aggression in Asia increased; it became clear war was imminent.
- The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor shocked Americans and drew the United States into the war.

250,000 casualties on the Soviet army in Crimea (**cry-MEE-uh**), and Hitler launched a powerful offensive to seize the Caucasian oil fields. German forces moved relentlessly eastward in North Africa, threatening the Suez (**soo-EZ**) Canal, Britain's oil lifeline.

The Japanese inflicted defeat after defeat on Allied Pacific forces. Tojo followed Pearl Harbor with a rampage across the Pacific that put Guam, Wake Island, Hong Kong, Singapore, Burma, and the Netherlands East Indies under Japan's control by the end of April 1942. American forces in the Philippines, besieged for months on the island of Bataan, surrendered in May. Japan's rising sun flag blazed over hundreds of islands in the central and western Pacific, and over the entire eastern perimeter of the Asian mainland from the border of Siberia to the border of India.

AMERICA MOBILIZES FOR WAR

How did war mobilization transform the American economy and government?

In December 1941, American armed forces numbered only 1.6 million, and war production accounted for just 15 percent of U.S. industrial output. Pearl Harbor changed everything. Within a week of the attack, Congress passed the War Powers Act, granting the president unprecedented authority. Volunteers and draftees swelled the army and navy. By war's end, 15 million men and nearly 350,000 women had served. The far-reaching domestic changes under way would outlast the war and significantly alter the nation's attitudes, behavior, and institutions.

Organizing for Victory

To direct the military engine, Roosevelt formed the Joint Chiefs of Staff, made up of representatives of the army, navy, and army air force. The changing nature of modern warfare also led to the creation of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency, to conduct the espionage required for strategic planning.

Roosevelt established the **War Production Board (WPB)** to allocate materials, to limit the production of civilian goods, and to distribute contracts. The newly created War Manpower Commission (WMC) supervised the mobilization of men and women for the military, war industry, and agriculture; the National War Labor Board (NWLB) mediated disputes between management and labor; and the **Office of Price Administration (OPA)** imposed strict price controls to check inflation.

Although a Nazi commander had jeered, "The Americans can't build planes, only electric iceboxes and razor blades," the United States achieved a miracle of war production in 1942. Car makers retooled to produce planes and tanks; a pinball-machine maker converted to armor-piercing shells. By late 1942, 33 percent of the economy was committed to war production. Whole new industries appeared virtually overnight. With almost all of the nation's crude-rubber supply now in Japanese-controlled territory, the government built some fifty new synthetic-rubber plants. By the end of the war, the United States had become the world's largest exporter of synthetic rubber.

War Production Board (WPB)

Government agency that oversaw the transition from a peacetime to wartime economy

Office of Price Administration (OPA)

Government agency that kept inflation down through rationing and strict price controls

America also became the world's greatest weapons manufacturer, producing more war materiel by 1945 than its Axis enemies combined—three hundred thousand military aircraft, eighty-six thousand tanks, 2.6 million machine guns, and 6 million tons of bombs. The United States built more than five thousand cargo ships and eighty-six thousand warships. Henry J. Kaiser (**KYE-zer**), who had supervised the construction of the Boulder Dam, introduced prefabrication to cut the time needed to build ships. In 1941, the construction of a Liberty-class merchant ship took six months; in 1943, construction was completed in less than two weeks. By 1945, Kaiser, dubbed “Sir Launchalot,” was completing a cargo ship every day.

Such breakneck production had costs. The size and powers of the government expanded as defense spending zoomed from 9 percent of gross national product (GNP) in 1940 to 46 percent in 1945; the federal budget soared from \$9 billion to \$98 billion. Federal civilian employees mushroomed from 1.1 million to 3.8 million. The executive branch, directing the war effort, grew the most, and an alliance formed between the defense industry and the military. (A generation later, Americans would call these concentrations of power the “imperial presidency” and the “military-industrial complex.”)

“Dr. New Deal,” in FDR’s words, gave way to “Dr. Win the War.” To encourage business to convert to war production, the government guaranteed profits, provided generous tax write-offs, and suspended antitrust prosecutions. “If you are going to try to go to war in a capitalist country,” said Secretary of War Stimson, “you have to let business make money out of the process or business won’t work.” Two-thirds of all war-production spending went to the country’s hundred largest firms, greatly accelerating trends toward economic concentration.

The War Economy

The United States spent more than \$360 billion (\$250 million a day) to defeat the Axis, ten times the cost of World War I. Wartime spending and the draft not only vanquished unemployment, but also stimulated an industrial boom that made most Americans prosper. It doubled U.S. industrial output and the per capita GNP, created 17 million new jobs, increased corporate after-tax profits by 70 percent, and raised the real wages or purchasing power of industrial workers by 50 percent.

The federal government poured \$40 billion into the West, making it an economic powerhouse as the center of massive aircraft and shipbuilding industries. California alone secured more than 10 percent of all federal funds; by 1945 nearly half the personal income in the state came from the federal government.

A dynamic Sun Belt, stretching from the coastal Southeast to the coastal Southwest, was the recipient of billions spent on military bases and the needs of the armed forces. The South’s industrial capacity increased by 40 percent and per capita income tripled.

Full employment, a longer workweek, larger paychecks, and the increased hiring of minorities, women, and the elderly brought a middle-class standard of living to millions of families. The war years produced the only significant shift toward greater equality in the distribution of income in the twentieth century. The earnings of the bottom fifth of all workers rose 68 percent, and those of the middle class doubled. The richest 5 percent, conversely, saw their share of total disposable income drop from 23 to 17 percent.

Large-scale commercial farmers prospered, benefiting from higher consumer prices and increased productivity thanks to improved fertilizers and more mechanization. As sharecroppers, tenants, and small farmers left the land for better-paying industrial jobs, the overall agricultural population fell by 17 percent. Farming became “agribusiness,” and organized agriculture wielded power equal to organized labor, big government, and big business.

Organized labor grew mightier as union membership rose from 9 million to 14.8 million workers, in part because of the expansion of the labor force. Although the National War Labor Board attempted to limit wage increases to restrain inflation, unions negotiated unprecedented fringe benefits for workers, including paid vacation time and health and pension plans. As most workers honored the “no-strike” pledge that they had given immediately after Pearl Harbor, less than one-tenth of 1 percent of wartime working time was lost to strikes.

Far more than strikes, inflation threatened the wartime economy. The OPA constantly battled inflation, which was fueled by greater spending power combined with a scarcity of goods. Throughout 1942, prices climbed at a 2-percent-per-month clip; however, at the year’s end, Congress gave the president authority to freeze wages, prices, and rents. As the OPA clamped down, inflation slowed dramatically: Consumer prices went up only 8 percent in the war’s last two years.

The OPA also instituted rationing to combat inflation and to conserve scarce materials. Under the slogan “Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without,” the OPA rationed such products as gasoline, sugar, cheese, and meat. Most Americans cheerfully formed carpools, planted victory gardens, and recycled paper and fats, while their children, known as “Uncle Sam’s Scrappers” and “Tin-Can Colonels,” scoured their neighborhoods for scrap metal.

Buying war bonds further curtailed inflation by decreasing consumer purchasing power, while giving civilians a sense of involvement in the distant war. Small investors bought \$40 billion in “E” bonds, and wealthy individuals and corporations invested nearly twice that amount. Bond sales raised almost half the money needed to finance the war. Roosevelt sought to raise the rest by drastically increasing taxes, even though Congress refused the president much of what he sought. Still, the Revenue Act of 1942 raised the top income-tax rate from 60 percent to 94 percent and imposed income taxes on middle- and lower-income Americans for the first time. Beginning in 1943, the payroll-deduction system automatically withheld income taxes from wages and salaries.

“A Wizard War”

Recognizing wartime scientific and technological developments, Winston Churchill dubbed World War II “a wizard war.” Mathematicians went to work deciphering enemy codes, psychologists devised propaganda, and, as never before, the major combatants mobilized scientists into virtual armies of invention. In 1941, FDR created the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) for the development of new weapons and medicines. The OSRD spent more than \$1 billion to produce improved radar and sonar, rocket weapons, and proximity fuses for mines and artillery shells. It also funded the development of jet aircraft and high-altitude bombsights. Other OSRD research hastened the widespread use of insecticides,

contributed to improved blood transfusions, and produced “miracle drugs,” such as penicillin.

The demand for greater accuracy in artillery required the kind of rapid, detailed calculations that only computing machines could supply. By 1944, navy personnel in the basement of Harvard’s physics laboratory were operating IBM’s Mark I, a cumbersome device fifty-one feet long and eight feet high that weighed five tons. A second-generation computer, ENIAC, soon reduced the time to multiply two tenth-place numbers from Mark I’s three seconds to less than three-thousandths of a second.

Nothing saved the lives of more wounded servicemen than improvements in battlefield medical care. Military needs led to advances in heart and lung surgery, and to the use of synthetic antimalarial drugs to substitute for scarce quinine. So-called miracle drugs; antibiotics to combat infections, a rarity on the eve of war, would be copiously produced. The use of DDT cleared many islands of malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Along with innovations like the Mobile Auxiliary Surgical Hospital (MASH), science helped save tens of thousands of soldiers’ lives and improved the health of the nation as well. Life expectancy rose by three years during the war.

The atomic bomb project began in August 1939 when Albert Einstein, a Jewish refugee and Nobel Prize-winning physicist, warned Roosevelt that Nazi scientists were seeking to use atomic physics to construct an extraordinarily destructive weapon. In 1941 FDR launched a massive Anglo-American secret program—the Soviets were excluded—to construct an atomic bomb. The next year, the participating physicists, both Americans and Europeans, achieved a controlled chain reaction and acquired the basic knowledge necessary to develop the bomb. By July 1945 this program, code-named the **Manhattan Project**, had employed more than 120,000 people and spent nearly \$2 billion.

Manhattan Project Code name for program to develop the atomic bomb

Just before dawn on July 16, 1945, a blinding fireball with “the brightness of several suns at midday” rose over the desert at Alamogordo, New Mexico, followed by a billowing mushroom cloud. Equivalent to twenty thousand tons of TNT, the blast from this first atomic explosion was felt a hundred miles away. The atomic age had dawned.

Propaganda and Politics

People as well as science and machinery had to be mobilized. To sustain a spirit of unity, the Roosevelt administration carefully managed public opinion. The Office of Censorship, established in December 1941, examined all letters going overseas and worked with publishers and broadcasters to suppress information that might damage the war effort, such as details of troop movements.

To shape public opinion, FDR created the Office of War Information (OWI) in June 1942. The OWI employed more than four thousand writers, artists, and advertising specialists to explain the war and to counter enemy propaganda. The OWI depicted the war as a moral struggle between good and evil—the enemy had to be destroyed, not merely defeated. Hollywood films highlighted the heroism and unity of the American forces, while inciting hatred of the enemy. Films about the war portrayed the Japanese, in particular, as treacherous and cruel, as beasts in the jungle, as “slant-eyed rats.”

CHECKING IN

- Industrial mobilization was the key to Allied victory, and the United States achieved a miracle of war production.
- Wartime spending lifted the United States out of the Great Depression.
- Government intervened in the economy to direct production and control inflation.
- Science and technology played a major role in the war effort, with the development of radar, sonar, the first computers, and the atomic bomb.
- The war greatly increased government power in shaping public opinion.

While the Roosevelt administration concentrated on the war, Republican critics seized the initiative in domestic politics. Full employment and high wages undermined the Democrats' class appeal, and many of the urban and working-class voters essential to the Roosevelt coalition were serving in the armed forces and did not vote in the 1942 elections. As Republicans gained nine seats in the Senate and forty-six in the House, conservative Republicans and southern Democrats held the power to make or break legislation. Resentful of the wartime expansion of executive authority and determined to curb labor unions and welfare spending, the conservatives abolished the CCC and the WPA, and rebuffed attempts to extend the New Deal.

Despite the strength of the conservative coalition, the war expanded governmental and executive power enormously. As never before, Washington managed the economy, molded public opinion, funded scientific research, and influenced people's daily lives.

THE BATTLEFRONT, 1942–1944

What were the major aspects of Allied military strategy in Europe and Asia?

America's industrial might and Soviet manpower turned the tide of war, and diplomacy followed in its wake. Allied unity diminished as the Axis weakened; increasingly, the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union each sought wartime strategies and postwar arrangements best suited to its own interests.

Liberating Europe

After Pearl Harbor, British and American officials agreed to concentrate on defeating Germany first and then Japan. However, they differed on where to mount an attack.

Joseph Stalin demanded a second front, an invasion of western Europe to force Hitler to transfer troops west and thus relieve pressure on the Russians, who faced the full fury of the Nazi armies. Churchill insisted on clearing the Mediterranean before invading France, and he wanted American aid in North Africa to protect the Suez Canal. Roosevelt gave in to Churchill, and so American troops under General Dwight D. Eisenhower landed in Morocco and Algeria. Pushing eastward, they trapped the German and Italian armies being driven westward by the British, and in May 1943 some 260,000 German-Italian troops surrendered, despite Hitler's orders to fight to the death. All of Africa now lay in Allied hands.

Left alone to face two-thirds of the Nazi force, the Soviet Union hung on and, in the turning point of the European war, defeated Germany in the protracted Battle of Stalingrad (*STALL-in-grahd*) (August 1942–January 1943). As the Russian snow turned red with blood (costing each side more battle deaths in half a year than the United States suffered in the entire war), Soviet forces saved Stalingrad, defended Moscow, and relieved besieged Leningrad. The Red Army then went on the offensive along a thousand-mile front (see Map 25.1).

Joseph Stalin Dictator of the Soviet Union



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Map 25.1 World War II in Europe and Africa

The momentous German defeats at Stalingrad and in Tunisia early in 1943 marked the turning point in the war against the Axis. By 1945 the Allied conquest of Hitler's "thousand year" Reich was imminent.

Interactive Map

Although Stalin renewed his plea for a second front, Churchill again objected, and Roosevelt again agreed to a British plan: the invasion of Sicily. In summer 1943 Anglo-American forces gained control of Sicily in less than a month. Italian military leaders deposed and executed Mussolini and surrendered to the Allies on September 8. As Allied forces moved up the Italian peninsula, German troops poured into Italy. Facing elite Nazi divisions in strong defensive positions, the Allies spent eight months inching their way 150 miles to Rome and were still battling through northern Italy when the war in Europe ended in May 1945.

In 1943 and 1944, the United States and Britain turned the tide in the Atlantic and sent thousands of bombers over Germany. At the start of 1943, British and American air forces began round-the-clock bombardment, raining thousands of tons of bombs on German cities. In raids on Hamburg (**HAHM-boorg**) in July 1943, Allied planes dropping incendiary bombs created terrible firestorms, killing at least thirty-five thousand people and leveling the city, much as they had done earlier at Cologne (**koh-LOHN**) and would do to Dresden in February 1945, where an estimated sixty thousand people died.

Meanwhile, in July 1943, as the Soviet offensive reclaimed Russian cities and towns from the Nazis, the German armies fell into perpetual retreat. Advancing swiftly, the Red Army drove the Germans out of Soviet territory by mid-1944 and plunged into Poland, where the Soviets set up a puppet government. Late summer and early fall saw Soviet troops seize Romania and Bulgaria and aid communist guerrillas under Josip Broz Tito (**TEE-toh**) in liberating Yugoslavia.

As the Soviets swept across eastern Europe, Allied forces opened the long-promised second front. On June 6, 1944—D-Day—nearly two hundred thousand Allied troops landed in Normandy in northwestern France, gaining a toehold on French soil. Within six weeks, another million Allied troops had waded ashore. Under General Eisenhower, the Allies liberated Paris in August and reached the German border by the end of summer.

In mid-December, as the Allies prepared for a full-scale assault on the German heartland, Hitler in a desperate gamble threw his last reserves against American positions. The **Battle of the Bulge**—named for the “bulge” eighty miles long and fifty miles wide that Hitler’s troops drove into the Allies’ line—raged for nearly a month, and when it ended American troops stood on the banks of the Rhine. The cost was staggering to the United States: fifty-five thousand soldiers dead or wounded and eighteen thousand taken prisoner. But the way to Germany lay open, and the end of the European war was in sight.

Battle of the Bulge Desperate German counteroffensive; launched December 1944; failed to stop the Allied advance into Germany

War in the Pacific

The day after the Philippines fell to Japan in mid-May 1942, U.S. and Japanese fleets confronted each other in the Coral Sea off northeastern Australia, the first naval battle in history fought entirely from aircraft carriers. Both sides took heavy losses, but the Battle of the Coral Sea stopped the Japanese advance on Australia. Less than a month later, a Japanese armada turned toward Midway Island, the crucial American outpost between Hawaii and Japan. Because the U.S. Signal Corps had broken the Japanese naval code, Japan’s plans and the locations of her ships were known. American carriers and their planes consequently won a decisive victory, sinking four Japanese carriers and destroying several hundred enemy planes. Suddenly on the defensive, the stunned Japanese could now only try to hold what they had already won.

On the offensive, U.S. marines waded ashore at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in August 1942. Facing fierce resistance as well as tropical diseases like malaria, the Americans needed six months to take the island, a bitter preview of the battles to come. As the British moved from India to retake Burma, the United States began a two-pronged advance toward Japan in 1943. The army, under General Douglas MacArthur, advanced north on the islands between Australia and the Philippines, and the navy and marines, under Admiral Chester Nimitz, “island-hopped” across the central Pacific to seize strategic bases and put Tokyo in range of American bombers. In fall 1944 the navy annihilated what remained of the Japanese fleet at the battles of the Philippine Sea and Leyte Gulf, giving the United States control of Japan’s air and shipping lanes and leaving the Japanese home islands open to invasion (see Map 25.2).



Map 25.2 World War II in the Pacific

American ships and planes stemmed the Japanese offensive at the Battles of the Coral Sea and Midway Island. Thereafter, the Japanese were on the defensive against American amphibious assaults and air strikes.

Interactive Map

The Grand Alliance

President Roosevelt had two main goals for the war: the total defeat of the Axis at the least possible cost in American lives, and the establishment of a world order strong enough to ensure peace, open trade, and national self-determination in the postwar era.

Churchill and Stalin had other goals. Britain sought to retain its imperial possessions and a balance of power against the Soviet Union in Europe. The Soviet Union wanted a permanently weakened Germany and a sphere of influence in eastern Europe to protect itself against future attacks from the West. To hold together this uneasy alliance, FDR used personal diplomacy to mediate conflicts.

In January 1943, Roosevelt and Churchill met at Casablanca, Morocco's main port, where they resolved to attack Italy before invading France and proclaimed that the war would continue until the Axis accepted "unconditional surrender." In this

CHECKING IN

- The Anglo-American decision to invade North Africa meant that Russia would remain the only battlefront in Europe, where the Soviet victory at Stalingrad was the turning point in the war.
- On D-Day, June 6, 1944, the Allies launched a cross-channel invasion into France; their offensive stalled until American victory in the Battle of the Bulge in late 1944 opened the path to victory.
- Americans went on the offensive in the Pacific in August 1942, relying primarily on island-hopping and carriers; by late 1944, American forces were poised at the fringe of the Japanese home islands.
- Despite their alliance, the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union had very different war goals.

proclamation they sought to reduce Soviet mistrust of the West, which had deepened because of the postponement of the second front.

In 1943, FDR and Churchill traveled to Tehran, Iran's capital, to confer with Stalin. Here they set the invasion of France for June 1944 and agreed to divide Germany into zones of occupation and to impose reparations on the Reich. Most important to Roosevelt, at Tehran Stalin also pledged to enter the Pacific war after Hitler's defeat.

Roosevelt then turned his attention to domestic politics. Conservative gains in both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party drove FDR to dump the liberal Henry A. Wallace from the ticket and accept Harry S. Truman as his vice-presidential candidate. A moderate senator from Missouri, now dubbed "the new Missouri Compromise," Truman restored a semblance of unity to the party for the 1944 campaign. To compete, the Republicans nominated moderate and noncontroversial New York governor Thomas E. Dewey. The campaign focused more on personalities than on issues, and the still-popular FDR defeated his dull GOP opponent, but with the narrowest margin since 1916—winning only 53 percent of the popular vote. A weary Roosevelt, secretly suffering from hypertension and heart disease, now directed his waning energies toward defeating the Axis and constructing an international peacekeeping system.

WAR AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

What were the major effects of World War II on American society, including minorities and women?

The crisis of war altered the most basic patterns of American life. Few families went untouched. More than 15 million Americans served in the armed forces, an equal number moved to find jobs, and millions of women went to work outside the home. As well, the war opened some doors of opportunity for African-Americans and other minorities, although many remained closed. It heightened minority aspirations and widened cracks in the wall of white racist attitudes and policy, while maintaining much of America's racial caste system, thereby tilling the ground for future crises.

The GIs' War

Most Americans in the armed forces griped about regimentation and were more interested in dry socks than in ideology. They knew little of the big strategies and cared less. They wanted to defeat Hitler, avenge Pearl Harbor, and return to a secure, familiar United States.

But the GIs' war dragged on for almost four years, transforming its participants. Millions who had never been far from home traveled to unfamiliar cities and remote lands. Sharing tents and foxholes with fellow Americans of different religions, nationalities, and social backgrounds helped to erase deep-seated prejudices. Besides serving with people they had never previously encountered, over a million GIs married overseas, sowing the seeds of a more tolerant and diverse national culture.

Physical misery, chronic exhaustion, and intense combat left psychological as well as physical wounds. In the Pacific, both American and Japanese troops saw the others in racist terms, as animals to be exterminated. Both sides sometimes behaved brutally, machine-gunning pilots parachuting from damaged planes, torturing and killing prisoners, and mutilating enemy dead. Atrocities also occurred in the war against Germany, although on a lesser scale. A battalion of the Second Armored Division calling itself “Roosevelt’s Butchers” boasted that it shot all the German soldiers it captured.

The Home Front

Nothing transformed the social topography more than the vast internal migration of an already-mobile people.

Americans swarmed to the centers of war production, especially the Pacific coast states, which manufactured half of the nation’s wartime ships and airplanes. Six million people left farms to work in cities, and several million southern whites and blacks migrated northward and westward. They doubled Albuquerque’s population and increased San Diego’s some 90 percent.

Lifestyles became freewheeling as Americans moved far from their hometowns, leaving behind their traditional values. Housing shortages left millions living in converted garages, tent cities, or cars. Overcrowding as well as wartime separations strained family and community life. High rates of divorce, family violence, and juvenile delinquency reflected the disruptions.

Millions of American women donned pants, put their hair in bandannas, and went to work in defense plants. Reversing a decade of efforts to exclude women from the labor force, the federal government in 1942 urged women into war production. More than 6 million women entered the labor force during the war, bringing the number of employed women to 19 million. Less than a quarter of the labor force in 1940, women constituted well over a third of all workers in 1945.

Before the war most female wage earners had been young and single. By contrast, 75 percent of the new women workers were married, 60 percent were over thirty-five, and more than 33 percent had children under the age of fourteen. Women tended blast furnaces, operated cranes, drove taxis, and worked in shipyards. **“Rosie the Riveter,”** her muscular arms cradling a gun, symbolized the woman war worker; she was, as a popular song put it, “making history working for victory.”

“Rosie the Riveter” Symbol of women who assumed what had been “men’s work” in war industries



Rosie the Riveter

Memorialized in song and story, “Rosie the Riveter” symbolized the women war workers who assumed jobs in heavy industry to take up the slack for the absent 15 million men in the armed services. Here a very real Rosie the Riveter is doing her job in April 1943 at the Baltimore manufacturing plant for Martin PMB Mariners.

Yet traditional attitudes and gender discrimination existed throughout the war. Women earned only about 65 percent of what men earned for the same work, and labor unions often stipulated that women had to give up their jobs to men returning from military service.

The stigma attached to working mothers also shaped government resistance to establishing child-care centers for women employed in defense. “A mother’s primary duty is to her home and children,” the Labor Department’s Children’s Bureau stated. “This duty is one she cannot lay aside, no matter what the emergency.” Funds for federal child-care centers covered fewer than 10 percent of defense workers’ children, and the young suffered. Terms like “eight-hour orphans” and “latch-key children” described children forced to fend for themselves. Fueling fears that the employment of women outside the home would cause the family to disintegrate, juvenile delinquency increased fivefold and the divorce rate nearly doubled.

The impact of war on women and the family proved multifaceted and even contradictory. As the divorce rate soared, so did marriage rates and birthrates. Although some women remained content to roll bandages for the Red Cross, more than three hundred thousand joined the armed forces and, for the first time in American history, were given regular military status and served in positions other than that of nurse—for instance, as mechanics, radio operators, mapmakers, and ferry pilots. Overall, women gained a new sense of their potential. The war proved their capabilities and widened their world.

The loss of students to the armed services and war production forced colleges to admit large numbers of women and to contract themselves out to the military. Military training programs sent nearly a million servicemen and women to college campuses to acquire skills in engineering, foreign languages, economics, and the sciences. Higher education became more dependent on the federal government, and universities competed for federal contracts and subsidies.

The war profoundly affected American culture. Spending on books and theater entertainment more than doubled. More than 60 million people (in a population of 135 million) attended movies weekly. Hollywood turned out a spate of war films that reinforced the image of Nazis and Japanese as fiends. But as the war dragged on, people tired of propaganda, and Hollywood reemphasized romance and adventure with such stars as Katharine Hepburn and Judy Garland.

Similarly, popular music went from “Goodbye, Mama, I’m Off to Yokohama,” the first hit of 1942, to songs of lost love and loneliness, like “They’re Either Too Young or Too Old.” By 1945, bitterness pervaded lyrics, and songs like “Saturday Night Is the Loneliest Night of the Week” revealed impatience for the war’s end.

In bookstores, nonfiction crowded the shelves, and every news magazine increased its circulation. Wendell Willkie’s *One World* (1943) became the fastest-selling title in publishing history to that time, with 2 million copies snapped up in two years. A vision of a world without military alliances and spheres of influence, this brief volume expressed hope that an international organization would extend peace and democracy through the postwar world.

Americans also stayed glued to their radios during the war. The quest for up-to-date information kept radio audiences at record levels. Networks increased their news programs from 4 percent to nearly 30 percent of their daily schedule. Daytime serials, like those featuring Dick Tracy tracking down Axis spies, reached the height

of their popularity; a platoon of new comic book superheroes, including Captain America and Captain Marvel, saw action on the battlefield. Even Bugs Bunny put on a uniform to combat America's foes.

Racism and New Opportunities

Realizing that the government needed the loyalty and work of a united people to win the war, African-American leaders saw new pathways to securing equal rights. In 1942 civil-rights spokesmen insisted that African-American support of the war hinged on the United States' commitment to racial justice. They demanded a "Double V" campaign to gain victory over racial discrimination at home as well as over the Axis abroad.

Membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People multiplied nearly ten times, reaching five hundred thousand in 1945. The association pressed for anti-poll tax and anti-lynching legislation, decried discrimination in defense industries and the armed services, and sought to end African-American disfranchisement. The campaign for black voting rights gained momentum when the Supreme Court, in *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), ruled Texas's all-white primary unconstitutional. This decision eliminated a barrier that had existed in eight states, although these states promptly resorted to other devices to minimize African-American voting.

A new civil-rights organization, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), was founded in 1942. Employing the strategy of nonviolent resistance to challenge Jim Crow laws, CORE sought to desegregate public facilities in northern cities. Also proposing nonviolent direct action was **A. Philip Randolph**, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. In 1941 Randolph called for a "thundering march" of one hundred thousand blacks on Washington if the president did not end discrimination in the armed services and the defense industry. FDR agreed to compromise.

In June 1941, Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, the first presidential directive on race since Reconstruction. It prohibited discriminatory employment practices by federal agencies and all unions and companies engaged in war-related work and established the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) to enforce this policy. Although the FEPC did not apply to the armed forces and lacked effective enforcement powers, soaring war production and a shrinking labor pool resulted in the employment of 2 million African-Americans in industry and two hundred thousand in the federal civil service. African-American membership in labor unions doubled, and the number of skilled and semiskilled African-American workers tripled. Average earnings for blacks increased from \$457 to \$1,976 a year, compared to \$2,600 for whites.

About 1 million African-Americans served in the armed forces. Due to wartime needs, the military ended its policies of excluding blacks from the marines and coast guard and confining them to mess duty in the navy as well as noncombatant units in the army. In 1944, both the army and navy began token integration in some training facilities, ships, and battlefield platoons. The great majority of blacks, however, served throughout the war in segregated service units commanded by white officers. This indignity, made worse by the failure of military authorities to protect black servicemen off the post and by the use of white military police to keep blacks "in their place," sparked rioting on army bases. At least fifty black soldiers died in racial conflicts during the war.

A. Philip Randolph Labor leader whose threatened march on Washington led to the creation of the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC)

Violence within the military mirrored growing racial tensions at home. As blacks protested against discrimination, many whites resisted all efforts by blacks to improve their economic and social status. Race riots erupted in 1943 in Harlem, Mobile, and Beaumont, Texas. The bloodiest melee exploded in Detroit that June. By its end, twenty-five blacks and nine whites lay dead, more than seven hundred had been injured, and more than \$2 million in property had been destroyed.

Yet the war brought significant changes that would eventually result in a successful drive for black civil rights. The migration of over seven hundred thousand blacks from the South turned a southern problem into a national concern. It created a new attitude of independence in African-Americans freed from the constraints of caste. As the growing numbers of blacks in northern cities began to vote, moreover, African-Americans could hold a balance of power in close elections. This prompted politicians in both major parties to extend greater recognition to blacks and to pay more attention to civil-rights issues.

In addition, the horrors of Nazi racism discredited America's own white supremacist attitudes. A former governor of Alabama complained that Nazism has "wrecked the theories of the master race with which we were so contented so long." A pluralist vision of American society now became part of official rhetoric, as well as the liberal-left agenda. In a massive study of race problems entitled *An American Dilemma* (1944), Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal concluded that "not since Reconstruction had there been more reason to anticipate fundamental changes in American race relations." Returning black veterans, and African-Americans who had served the nation on the home front, soon expected to gain all the rights enjoyed by whites.

War and Diversity

Wartime winds of change brought new opportunities, and problems, to other American minorities. Twenty-five thousand Native Americans served in the armed forces, including Navajo "code-talkers" who confounded the Japanese by relaying secret messages in an unbreakable code based on their native tongue. Another fifty thousand Indians left reservations to work in defense. For most, it was the first experience of living in a non-Indian world, and after the war some would remain in the cities. Continued discrimination, however, would force a majority back to their reservations, which suffered severely from budget cuts during the war and the immediate postwar years.

To relieve agricultural labor shortages, the federal government negotiated an agreement with Mexico to import temporary workers called *braceros* (brah-SARE-ohs). Classified as foreign workers, not immigrants, an estimated two hundred thousand *braceros* received short-term contracts. Farm owners frequently violated these contracts and also encouraged an influx of illegal immigrants.

Unable to complain about their working conditions without risking arrest and deportation, hundreds of thousands of Mexicans were exploited by agribusinesses in Arizona, California, and Texas. At the same time, tens of thousands of Chicanos left agricultural work for jobs in factories, shipbuilding yards, and steel mills. By 1943, about half a million Chicanos were living in Los Angeles County, making up 10 percent of the total population.

braceros "Guest workers"; Mexican laborers legally brought into United States

Much of the hostility toward Mexican-Americans focused on young gang members who wore “zoot suits”—a fashion that originated in Harlem and emphasized broad-shouldered jackets and pleated trousers. Known as *pachucos*, zoot-suited Mexican-Americans aroused the ire of servicemen stationed or on leave in Los Angeles who saw them as delinquents and draft dodgers. After newspaper headlines of a Chicano “crime wave,” bands of sailors and soldiers rampaged through Los Angeles in early June 1943, stripping *pachucos*, cutting their long hair, and beating them. Military authorities looked the other way. City police intervened only to arrest Mexican-Americans, and the city council made the wearing of a zoot suit a misdemeanor.

Unlike African-Americans, however, more than 350,000 Mexican-Americans served in the armed forces without segregation, and in all combat units. They volunteered in higher numbers than warranted by their percentage of the population and earned a disproportionate number of citations for distinguished service. And much like black and Indian veterans, Mexican-American veterans organized new groups to press for equal rights.

Thousands of gay men and lesbians who served in the armed forces also found new wartime opportunities. Like other minorities, many gays saw the war as a chance to prove their worth under fire. Yet some suspected of being gay were dishonorably discharged, sent to psychiatric hospitals, or imprisoned in so-called queer stockades. In 1945, gay veterans established the Veteran’s Benevolent Association, the first organization in the United States to combat discrimination against homosexuals.

The Internment of Japanese-Americans

Far more than any other minority in the United States, Japanese suffered grievously during the war. The internment of 112,000 Japanese-Americans, two-thirds of them native-born U.S. citizens, in relocation centers guarded by military police was a tragic reminder of the fragility of civil liberties in wartime.

The **internment of Japanese-Americans** policy reflected forty years of anti-Japanese sentiment on the West Coast, rooted in racial prejudice and economic rivalry. Self-serving politicians and farmers who wanted Japanese-American land had long decried the “yellow peril,” and after the attack on Pearl Harbor they whipped up the rage and fears

internment of Japanese-Americans Wartime policy to evacuate from the West Coast and incarcerate all those with Japanese heritage, U.S. citizens included



Young Nisei Evacuates at the Turlock Assembly Center

While awaiting their turn for baggage inspection on May 2, 1942, these children were interned in remote “relocation centers” along with thirty-seven thousand first-generation Japanese immigrants (Issei) and some seventy-five thousand native-born Japanese-American (Nisei) citizens of the United States. Hastily uprooted from their homes, farms, and stores, most lost all their property and personal possessions, and spent the war under armed guard.

CHECKING IN

- War triggered internal migration, as people sought war industry jobs which, like the military, tossed together Americans of widely different backgrounds.
- Women entered the work force in large numbers but were seen as “temporary workers.”
- African-Americans made significant gains and set the stage for the civil-rights drive after the war.
- To take advantage of wartime work, Indians left reservations, and Mexicans entered the United States under the *bracero* program.
- Japanese-Americans, interned in camps, were victims of prejudice and war hysteria.

of many white Californians. In February 1942, Roosevelt gave in to the pressure and issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the removal from military areas of anyone deemed a threat. Although not a single Japanese-American was apprehended for espionage or sedition and neither the FBI nor military intelligence uncovered any evidence of disloyal behavior by Japanese-Americans, the military ordered the eviction of all Nisei and Issei from the West Coast. Only Hawaii was excepted. Despite the far larger number of Hawaiians of Japanese ancestry, as well as of Japanese living in Hawaii, no internment policy was implemented there, and no sabotage occurred.

But on the mainland, Japanese-Americans, forced to sell their lands and homes at whatever prices they could obtain, were herded into barbed-wire-encircled detention camps in desolate areas of the West. The Supreme Court, in *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), upheld the constitutionality of the evacuation, stating that it would not question government claims of military necessity during the war. By then, however, the hysteria had subsided, and the government had begun a program of gradual release. In 1982, a special government commission would formally blame the Roosevelt administration’s action on “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership” and would apologize to Japanese-Americans for “a grave injustice.” In 1988, Congress voted to pay \$20,000 as compensation to each of the nearly sixty thousand Japanese-American internees still alive.

TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY, 1945

What new issues did the U.S. government confront in defeating Germany and Japan in 1945?

Spring and summer 1945 brought stunning changes. In Europe, the collapse of the Nazi Third Reich saw a new balance of power emerge. In Asia, continued Japanese resistance and reluctance to surrender led to the use of the atomic bomb. And in the United States, a new president, Harry Truman, presided over the end of World War II and the beginning of a new, “cold” war.

The Yalta Conference

By the time Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin met at the Soviet city of Yalta in February 1945, the military situation favored the Soviet Union. The Red Army had overrun Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria; helped drive the Nazis out of Yugoslavia; penetrated Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia; and was massed only fifty miles from Berlin. American forces, in contrast, were still recovering from the Battle of the Bulge and faced stiff resistance en route to Japan. The Joint Chiefs of Staff insisted that obtaining Stalin’s help in Asia was worth almost any price. Knowing that the United States did not want to fight a prolonged war against Japan, Stalin had the luxury of deciding whether and when to enter the Pacific war.

The **Yalta accords** mirrored these realities. Stalin again promised to declare war on Japan “two or three months” after Germany’s surrender, and in return Roosevelt and Churchill promised the Soviet Union concessions in Manchuria and the

Yalta accords 1945 agreements in which FDR made concessions to Stalin to induce him to join the Pacific war

territories that Russia had lost in the Russo-Japanese War forty years before. Stalin accepted the temporary partitioning of Germany and the postponement of discussions about reparations. On the matter dearest to FDR's heart, Stalin approved plans for a United Nations conference to establish a permanent international organization for collective security.

Stalin, however, proved adamant about Soviet domination in eastern Europe, particularly Poland. Twice in the twentieth century German troops had used Poland as a springboard for invading Russia. Stalin would not expose his land again, and after the Red Army captured Warsaw in January 1945, he brutally subdued the non-communist majority. Roosevelt and Churchill refused to recognize the communist Lublin regime, but they accepted Stalin's pledge to include noncommunist Poles in the new government and to allow free elections. They could do little else. Short of going to war against the Soviet Union while battling Germany and Japan, FDR could only hope that Stalin would keep his word.

Victory in Europe

Meanwhile, Allied armies closed the vise on Germany. In early March 1945, American troops captured Cologne and encircled Germany's industrial heartland. To counter the threat of Soviet power in postwar Europe, Churchill proposed a rapid thrust to Berlin, but Eisenhower, with Roosevelt's backing, overruled the British. Instead, to minimize their casualties and to reassure Stalin, the Americans advanced methodically on a broad front until they met the Russians at the Elbe River at the end of April. By then the Red Army had overrun Vienna and reached the suburbs of Berlin. On April 30 Hitler committed suicide in a bunker under the ruins of Berlin; the city fell to the Soviets on May 2. A hastily assembled German government surrendered unconditionally on May 8.

Jubilant Americans celebrated Victory in Europe (V-E) Day less than a month after they had mourned the death of FDR. On April 12 the exhausted president died of a cerebral hemorrhage. His unprepared successor inherited leadership of the most powerful nation in history—as well as troubles with the Soviet Union that seemed more intractable every day.

Harry S Truman had little familiarity with world affairs. Perhaps sensing his own inadequacies, he adopted a tough pose and counted on American military power to maintain the peace. In office less than two weeks, he lashed out at Soviet ambassador V. M. Molotov that the United States was tired of waiting for Moscow to allow free elections in Poland, and he threatened to cut off lend-lease aid if the Soviet Union did not cooperate. The Truman administration then reduced U.S. economic assistance to the Soviets and stalled on their request for a \$1 billion reconstruction loan. Simultaneously, Stalin strengthened his grip on eastern Europe, ignoring the promises he had made at Yalta.

The Truman administration neither conceded the Soviet sphere of influence in eastern Europe nor tried to end it. Truman still sought Stalin's cooperation in establishing the United Nations and in defeating Japan, but Soviet-American relations deteriorated. By June 1945, when the Allied countries framed the United Nations Charter in San Francisco, hopes for a peaceful new international order had dimmed, and the United Nations emerged as a diplomatic battleground. Truman, Churchill,

and Stalin met at Potsdam, Germany, from July 16 to August 2 to complete the post-war arrangements begun at Yalta. But the Allied leaders could barely agree to demilitarize Germany and to punish Nazi war criminals. Given the diplomatic impasse, only military power remained to determine the contours of the postwar world.

Holocaust Extermination of 6 million Jews, as well as 6 million others, by Nazis in the name of racial purity

The Holocaust

When news of the **Holocaust** (HAWL-oh-cost)—the term later given to the Nazis' extermination of European Jewry—first leaked out in early 1942, many Americans discounted the reports. Not until November did the State Department admit knowledge of the massacres. A month later, the American broadcaster Edward R. Murrow, who was listened to nationwide, reported on the systematic killing of millions of Jews, "It is a picture of mass murder and moral depravity unequalled in the history of the world. It is a horror beyond what imagination can grasp. . . . There are no longer 'concentration camps'—we must speak now only of 'extermination camps.'"

Most Americans considered the annihilation of Europe's 6 million Jews beyond belief. There were no photographs to prove it, and, some argued, the atrocities attributed to the Germans in World War I had turned out to be false. Therefore, few people took issue with the military's view that the way to liberate those enslaved by Hitler was by speedily winning the war. Pleas by American Jews for the Allies to bomb the death camps and the railroad tracks leading to them fell on deaf ears. In fall 1944, U.S. planes flying over Auschwitz in southern Poland bombed nearby factories but left the gas chambers and crematoria intact, in order, American officials explained, not to divert air power from more vital raids elsewhere.

How much could have been done remains uncertain. Still, the U.S. government never seriously considered rescue schemes or searched for a way to curtail the Nazis' "final solution" to the "Jewish question." Its feeble response was due to its overwhelming focus on winning the war as quickly as possible, congressional and public fears of an influx of destitute Jews into the United States, Britain's wish to placate the Arabs by keeping Jewish settlers out of Palestine, and the fear of some Jewish-American leaders that pressing the issue would increase anti-Semitism at home. The War Refugee Board managed to save the lives of just two hundred thousand Jews and twenty thousand non-Jews, but 6 million other Jews, about 75 percent of the European Jewish population, were gassed, shot, or incinerated, as were several million gypsies, communists, homosexuals, Polish Catholics, and others deemed unfit to live in the Third Reich.

"The things I saw beggar description," wrote General Eisenhower after visiting the first death camp liberated by the U.S. Army. He sent immediately for a delegation of congressional leaders and newspaper editors to make sure Americans would never forget the gas chambers and human ovens. Only after viewing the photographs and newsreels of corpses stacked like cordwood and living skeletons with their vacant, sunken eyes staring through barbed wire did most Americans see that the Holocaust was no myth.

The Atomic Bombs

In the Pacific, the war with Japan ground on. Early in 1945, marines secured the tiny island of Iwo Jima (EE-who jEE muh), seven hundred miles from Japan, at the



AP Photo

Atomic Bombs Bring Relief and Joy to Some

These U.S. servicemen, like many others hearing the news of the atomic bombs and the Japanese surrender, expressed their relief and joy that they would soon be safely coming home rather than having to participate in an invasion of Japan.

cost of twenty-five thousand marine casualties. A month later, Americans landed on Okinawa (*oh-kee-NAH-wah*), a key staging area for the planned invasion of the Japanese home islands, only 350 miles distant. After eighty-three days of fighting on land and sea, twelve thousand Americans lay dead and three times as many were wounded, a 35 percent casualty rate, which was higher than the losses the United States suffered at Normandy.

The appalling rate of loss on Iwo Jima and Okinawa weighed on the minds of American strategists as they thought about an invasion of the Japanese home islands. The Japanese Cabinet showed no willingness to give up the war despite Japan's being blockaded and bombed daily (in March a fleet of B-29s dropped incendiary bombs on Tokyo, burning most of the city to the ground and killing some eighty-four thousand). Japanese military leaders insisted on fighting to the bitter end. Japan possessed an army

Potsdam Declaration

President Truman's warning to the Japanese, before dropping an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, to surrender or face "utter destruction"

of over 2 million, plus up to 4 million reservists. The U.S. Joint Chiefs estimated that American casualties in an invasion of mainland Japan might exceed 1 million.

But the successful test of an atomic weapon at Alamogordo in mid-July presented an alternative. While at Potsdam, Truman, on July 25, ordered that an atomic bomb be used if Japan did not surrender before August 3. He publicly warned Japan to surrender unconditionally or face "prompt and utter destruction." When Japan rejected this **Potsdam Declaration**, Truman gave the military the go-ahead. On August 6, a B-29 named *Enola Gay* dropped a uranium bomb on Hiroshima (**hee-roh-SHEE-muh**), creating "a hell of unspeakable torments." A searing flash of heat, from a fireball estimated at three hundred thousand degrees centigrade, incinerated buildings and vaporized people. More than sixty thousand died from the blast and another seventy-five thousand later died of burns and radiation poisoning. On August 8, as promised, Stalin declared war on Japan. The next day, much of Nagasaki (**nah-gah-SAH-kee**) disappeared under the mushroom cloud of a plutonium bomb. On August 14, Japan accepted the American terms of surrender, which implicitly permitted the emperor to retain his throne but subordinated him to the U.S. commander of the occupation forces. General MacArthur received Japan's surrender on the battleship *Missouri* on September 2, 1945. The war was over.

Although Americans at the time overwhelmingly backed the atomic bombings of Japan as the necessary way to end the war quickly and with the least cost in lives, many critics later contended that Japan would have soon surrendered without the horrendous bombing. Some believed that racist American attitudes toward the Japanese motivated the decision. While racial hatred undoubtedly stirred exterminationist sentiment, those involved in the Manhattan Project regarded Germany as the target. Furthermore, considering the ferocity of the Allied bombings of Hamburg and Dresden, there is little reason to assume that the Allies would not have dropped atomic bombs on Germany had they been available. By 1945, the Allies as well as the Axis had abandoned restraints on attacking civilians.

Other critics maintain that demonstrating the bomb's terrible destructiveness on an uninhabited island would have moved Japan to surrender. We will never know for sure. American scientists rejected a demonstration bombing because the United

States had an atomic arsenal of only two bombs and they did not know whether the mechanism for detonating them in the air would work. Another line of criticism holds that Truman ordered the atomic attack primarily to end the Pacific war before Stalin could enter it and share in the postwar occupation of Japan. However, the foremost reason for Truman's decision was to shorten the war and save American lives.

The atomic bombs ended the deadliest war in history. A truly global conflict, involving over half the world's peoples, the war affected women, men, and children as victims of civilian bombing campaigns, as war workers, as slave laborers, and as comfort women. Some fifty million died—more than half of them noncombatants. The Soviet Union lost roughly twenty million people, China fifteen million, Poland six million, Germany four million, and Japan two million. Much of Asia and Europe was rubble. Some four hundred thousand American servicemen also perished, and, although physically unscathed, the United States had changed profoundly—for better and worse.

CHECKING IN

- Concessions to the Soviets at Yalta and accepting Soviet dominance of eastern Europe reflected military realities of the time.
- Victory over the Nazis in Europe transitioned quickly into a U.S.-Soviet confrontation.
- The end of the war revealed the horrors of the Holocaust.
- After atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Soviet Union declared war, Japan surrendered.
- The debate continues about whether use of the atomic bombs was necessary.

Chapter Summary

How did the American people and government respond to the international crises of the 1930s? (page 609)

As war loomed in Europe, most Americans were determined to avoid becoming involved; the Neutrality Acts were one such attempt to prevent involvement. Isolationists formed America First, but FDR sought increased military funding. Americans and the U.S. government turned their backs on Jewish refugees trying to flee Hitler.

What drew the United States into World War II? (page 613)

France had surrendered, and Britain was barely clinging to life by the fall of 1940; despite strong isolationist sentiment, FDR circumvented the Neutrality Acts with cash-and-carry and lend-lease programs for Britain. In Asia, the Japanese became increasingly aggressive but saw the United States as a major obstacle to expansion; their decision to gamble on an all-out attack on American possessions, including Pearl Harbor, precipitated American entry into the war.

How did war mobilization transform the American economy and government? (page 616)

Full mobilization of the industrial economy was the key to Allied victory. U.S. war production boomed as government spending ended the depression. The government established tight control over the economy, the press, and industry. Research and development brought technology to bear on the war, including radar, sonar, the computer, and the atomic bomb.

What were the major aspects of Allied military strategy in Europe and Asia? (page 620)

In Europe, the Soviet Union bore the brunt of the fighting; the battle of Stalingrad was the turning point of the war. The invasion of France on D-Day began the final push to Allied victory. In the Pacific, the United States relied largely on its carrier fleets and island-hopping campaigns. By war's end, however, the U.S.–Great Britain–Soviet Union alliance had seriously eroded because each nation had different war goals.

KEY TERMS

“Good Neighbor” policy (p. 609)

Benito Mussolini (p. 610)

Adolf Hitler (p. 610)

Nazi party (p. 610)

appeasement (p. 611)

Neutrality Acts (p. 611)

Winston Churchill (p. 613)

“lend-lease” (p. 614)

Atlantic Charter (p. 614)

War Production Board (WPB)
(p. 616)

Office of Price Administration
(OPA) (p. 616)

Manhattan Project (p. 619)

Joseph Stalin (p. 620)

Battle of the Bulge (p. 622)

“Rosie the Riveter” (p. 625)

A. Philip Randolph (p. 627)

braceros (p. 628)

internment of Japanese-
Americans (p. 629)

Yalta accords (p. 630)

Holocaust (p. 632)

Potsdam Declaration (p. 634)

What were the major effects of World War II on American society, including minorities and women? (page 624)

The Sun Belt prospered as government spending there soared; millions of Americans were caught up in a vast internal migration. People of widely diverse backgrounds came together in war jobs and the military. Large numbers of women entered the industrial work force, as did substantial numbers of African-Americans, Indians, and Mexicans. However, wartime propaganda and long-standing prejudice led to the internment of more than one hundred thousand Japanese-Americans solely because of their race.

What new issues did the U.S. government confront in defeating Germany and Japan in 1945? (page 630)

The Yalta conference revealed deep divisions among the Allies; however, FDR made substantial concessions to the Soviet Union because its help was needed to fight Japan. Victory over Germany quickly turned into a U.S.-Soviet confrontation. After viewing evidence, the full horrors of the Holocaust became apparent to Americans who had doubted earlier reports. The use of atomic bombs against Japanese cities was a major factor in convincing Japan to surrender, but the necessity of their use is still being debated.



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The Cold War Abroad and at Home

CHAPTER 26

1945–1960



The Day the Communists Took Over America,
by Isabel Moore

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Anticommunism and Containment, 1946–1953

How did the policies of the United States and Soviet Union lead to the beginnings of the Cold War?

The Truman Administration at Home, 1945–1952

What effect did the Cold War have on Truman's domestic program?

The Politics of Anticommunism

How did anticommunist sentiment affect American society and shape Eisenhower's presidency?

The Cold War Continues

In what ways did Eisenhower continue Truman's foreign policy, and in what ways did he change it?

Testifying before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1948, Whittaker Chambers, a repentant ex-communist, identified Alger Hiss as an underground member of a secret “communist cell” operating in the 1930s. The sad-faced, rumped Chambers appeared a tortured Christian soul. The handsome Hiss, in contrast, seemed the very symbol of the liberal establishment: Harvard Law graduate, former New Dealer, and now president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Hiss denied any communist affiliation and claimed not to know Chambers.

Most liberals saw Hiss as the victim of conservatives bent on tarnishing New Deal liberalism. To conservatives, he symbolized every wrong turn the nation had taken since the start of the

New Deal. Under rigorous questioning by freshman Republican congressman Richard Nixon, Hiss eventually admitted he knew Chambers but continued to deny having ever been a communist. Chambers then produced microfilms he had hidden inside a hollowed-out pumpkin. The so-called “pumpkin papers” appeared to be State Department documents from a typewriter once owned by Hiss. Chambers claimed Hiss had stolen the documents in the late 1930s and passed them on to the Soviets.

The Justice Department indicted Hiss for perjury. In January 1950, he was sentenced to five years in federal prison. Although the documents in question seemed insignificant, the conviction of Hiss fueled paranoia of a communist conspiracy. What other “fifth columnists” might be part of a diabolical Red underground in the United States? The Hiss case inspired many Republicans, particularly Nixon and Senator Joseph McCarthy, to press the communists-in-government issue hard. Once-reasonable concerns about American security now mushroomed into witch-hunts and suppression of dissent.

Such was the chilling domestic legacy of what came to be called the Cold War: a new form of international rivalry in which the United States and the Soviet Union avoided direct military conflict while using all their resources to thwart each other’s objectives. The conflict transformed the United States’ role in the world. The country in 1940 had no military alliances, a small defense budget, and limited troops; by 1960, it had built a massive military establishment, signed mutual-defense pacts with forty countries, erected military bases on every continent, and engaged the USSR in a seemingly unending nuclear-arms race.

Containing communism abroad changed America at home as well. It shifted national priorities, expanded the powers of the presidency, and spawned a second Red Scare that stifled liberalism and empowered Republicans. But Republicans failed to turn back the clock and repeal the New Deal. The politics of deadlock, inherited from the late 1930s, continued into the 1960s. Obsessed with communist spies, Americans increasingly looked to their own prosperity and family life for the joy and blessings denied them by the Cold War.

ANTICOMMUNISM AND CONTAINMENT, 1946–1953

How did the policies of the United States and Soviet Union lead to the beginnings of the Cold War?

The smoldering antagonisms between Moscow and Washington at war’s end continued to flare. The “shotgun wedding” that joined the United States and the USSR in an alliance to defeat Hitler dissolved into a struggle to fill the power vacuums left by the defeat of the Axis, the exhaustion and bankruptcy of Western Europe, and the crumbling of colonial empires in Asia and Africa. Misperception and misunderstanding mounted as the two powers sought greater security, each feeding the other’s fears, causing a cycle of distrust and animosity. The Cold War resulted.

Polarization and Cold War

The destiny of Eastern Europe, especially Poland, remained at the heart of U.S.-Soviet contention. Wanting to end the Soviet Union's vulnerability to invasions from the west, Stalin insisted on a demilitarized Germany and a buffer of nations friendly to the Soviet Union along its western flank. He considered a Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe essential to national security, a just reward for the Soviet Union's bearing the brunt of the war against Germany, and no different from the American spheres of influence in Western Europe, Japan, and Latin America. Stalin also believed that, at Yalta, Roosevelt and Churchill had implicitly accepted a Soviet zone in Eastern Europe.

With the Red Army occupying half of Europe at the war's end, Stalin installed pro-Soviet governments in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania, while communist governments independent of Moscow came to power in Albania (*al-BAY-nee-uh*) and Yugoslavia. Ignoring the Yalta Declaration of Liberated Europe, the Soviet Union barred free elections in Poland and brutally suppressed Polish democratic parties.

Stalin's insistence on dominance in Eastern Europe collided with Truman's unwillingness to concede Soviet supremacy beyond Russia's borders. What Stalin saw as critical to Russian security Truman viewed as a violation of the right of national self-determination, a betrayal of democratic principles, and a cover for communist aggression. Truman and his advisers believed that the appeasement of dictators only fed their appetite for expansion. Only a new world order based on the self-determination of all nations working in good faith within the United Nations could guarantee peace. Truman also thought that accepting the "enforced sovietization" of Eastern Europe would betray American war aims and condemn nations rescued from Hitler's tyranny to another totalitarian dictatorship.

Domestic political considerations also shaped Truman's response to Stalin. Truman feared that the Democratic Party would invite political disaster if he reneged on the Yalta agreements. The Democrats counted on winning most of the votes of the 6 million Polish-Americans and millions of other Americans of Eastern European origin, who remained keenly interested in the fates of their homelands. He resolved not to appear "soft on communism."

Combateness fit the temperament of the feisty Truman. Eager to demonstrate that he was in command, the president matched Stalin's intransigence on Polish elections with his own demands for Polish democracy. Emboldened by America's monopoly of atomic bombs and its position as the world's economic superpower, the president hoped that the United States could control the terms of postwar settlement.

The Iron Curtain Descends

Truman's assertiveness deepened Stalin's mistrust of the West. Stalin stepped up his confiscation of materials and factories from occupied territories and forced his satellite nations to close their doors to American trade and influence. In a February 1946 speech that the White House considered a "declaration of World War III," Stalin asserted that there could be no lasting peace with capitalism.

Two weeks later, a sixteen-page telegram from **George F. Kennan**, the American chargé d'affaires in Moscow, reached Washington. A leading student of Soviet

George F. Kennan American diplomat in Moscow, architect of the Cold War policy of containment, or continuous confrontation to stop Soviet expansion

Chronology



1946	George Kennan's "long telegram"; Winston Churchill's "iron curtain" speech; Republicans win control of Congress
1947	Truman Doctrine; Federal Employee Loyalty Program; Taft-Hartley Act; National Security Act; HUAC holds hearings on Hollywood
1948	State of Israel founded; Berlin airlift; Congress approves Marshall Plan to aid Europe; communist leaders put on trial under the Smith Act; Truman elected president
1949	North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) established; East and West Germany founded as separate nations; communist victory in China; People's Republic of China established; Soviet Union detonates an atomic bomb
1950	Soviet spy ring at Los Alamos uncovered; Joseph McCarthy launches anticommunist crusade; Korean War begins; McCarran Internal Security Act; Truman accepts NSC-68
1951	Julius and Ethel Rosenberg convicted of espionage
1952	First hydrogen bomb exploded; Dwight D. Eisenhower elected president
1953	Korean War truce signed
1954	Army-McCarthy hearings
1956	Suez crisis; Eisenhower reelected
1957	Eisenhower Doctrine announced
1959	Fidel Castro comes to power in Cuba
1960	U-2 incident

politics, Kennan warned that the only way to deal with Soviet intransigence was "a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies." Truman, who had already insisted that it was time "to get tough with Russia," accepted the idea of containment, as did many others in Washington who wanted "no compromise" with the communists. Containment soon became gospel.

In early March 1946, Truman accompanied Winston Churchill to Westminster College in Missouri, where the former British prime minister warned of a new threat to democracy. Stalin, he said, had drawn an "iron curtain" across the eastern half of Europe. Churchill called for an alliance of the English-speaking peoples against the Soviet Union and the maintenance of an Anglo-American monopoly on atomic weapons.

As mutual hostility escalated, the Soviets and Americans rushed to develop doomsday weapons. In 1946, Congress established the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) to spur both nuclear energy and nuclear weaponry. The AEC, however, devoted more than 90 percent of its effort to atomic bombs. By 1950, one AEC adviser reckoned, the United States "had a stockpile capable of somewhat more than reproducing World War II in a single day."

Thus, less than a year after American and Soviet soldiers had jubilantly met at the Elbe River to celebrate Hitler's defeat, the Cold War had begun. It would involve economic pressure, nuclear intimidation, propaganda, subversion, and proxy wars (fought by governments and peoples allied to the principals rather than directly by the principals themselves). It would affect American life as decisively as any military engagement the nation had ever fought.

Containing Communism

On February 21, 1947, Britain informed the United States that it could no longer afford to assist Greece and Turkey in their struggles against communist insurgents in the eastern Mediterranean. The harsh European winter, the most severe in memory, heightened the sense of urgency in Washington. The economies of Western Europe had ground to a halt, famine and tuberculosis plagued the continent, and colonies in Africa and Asia had risen in rebellion. Communist parties in France and Italy appeared ready to topple democratic coalition governments. Truman resolved to meet the Soviet challenge. But congressional leaders balked, agreeing to support the president only if he could “scare hell out of the country” to gain popular backing for meeting the Soviet threat.

Truman could and did. On March 12, 1947, while addressing a joint session of Congress, he asked for \$400 million in military assistance to Greece and Turkey while announcing the **Truman Doctrine**. Truman pictured the matter as a global struggle, pitting “freedom” and “liberty” against “oppression” and “terror,” in which the U.S. policy would be to support free peoples everywhere. The Truman Doctrine and the funds appropriated by Congress helped the Greek monarchy to defeat the rebel movement and Turkey to stay out of the Soviet orbit. Moreover, it proclaimed the nation’s intention to be a global policeman—everywhere on guard against advances by the Soviet Union and its allies—and it laid the foundation for American foreign policy for much of the next four decades.

To back up the new international initiative, Congress passed the National Security Act of 1947, unifying the armed forces under a single Department of Defense, creating the National Security Council (NSC) to advise the president on strategic matters, and establishing the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to gather information abroad and engage in covert activities in support of the nation’s security. In June the administration proposed massive U.S. assistance for European recovery. First proposed by the secretary of state and thus called the **Marshall Plan**, such aid would become another weapon in the arsenal against the spread of communism. Truman wanted to end the economic devastation believed to spawn communism. He correctly guessed that the Soviet Union and its satellites would refuse to take part in the plan, because of the controls linked to it, and accurately foresaw that Western European economic recovery would expand sales of American goods abroad and promote prosperity in the United States.

The Marshall Plan fulfilled its sponsors’ hopes. By 1952, industrial production had risen 200 percent in Western Europe, and the economic and social chaos that communists had exploited had been overcome in the sixteen nations that shared the \$17 billion in aid. Western Europe revived, prospered, and achieved an unprecedented unity. U.S. business, not coincidentally, boomed.

Truman Doctrine

Implementation of containment: the United States would support any government facing communist challenge

Marshall Plan Aid to rebuild Western Europe, including Germany

Confrontation in Germany

The Soviet Union reacted to the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan by tightening its grip on Eastern Europe. Then in 1947–1948, communist coups added Hungary and Czechoslovakia to the Soviet bloc, and Stalin turned his sights on Germany.

The 1945 Potsdam Agreement divided Germany into four separate zones (administered by France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States) and created a joint four-power administration for Germany’s capital, Berlin, which lay 110 miles inside the Soviet-occupied eastern zone. As the Cold War intensified,



Bettmann/Corbis

The Berlin Airlift, 1948

These German children watch an American plane in “Operation Vittles” bring food and supplies to their beleaguered city. The airlift kept a city of 2 million people alive for nearly a year and made West Berlin a symbol of the West’s resolve to contain the spread of Soviet communism.

Berlin airlift Use of cargo planes to supply Berlin, blockaded by Stalin, with supplies in 1948

the Western nations began to see a revived Germany as a buffer against Soviet expansion, and they gradually united their zones. In June 1948 Stalin responded by blocking all rail and highway routes through the Soviet zone into Berlin.

Truman resolved neither to abandon Berlin nor to shoot his way into the city and possibly trigger World War III. Instead, he ordered a massive airlift of supplies to the city (the **Berlin airlift**). American cargo planes landed in West Berlin every three minutes around the clock, bringing the mountain of food and fuel necessary to provide the blockaded city with a precarious lifeline. In May 1949, the Soviets ended the blockade. Stalin’s gambit had failed. The airlift highlighted American determination and technological prowess, revealed Stalin’s readiness to use innocent people as pawns, and dramatically heightened anti-Soviet feeling in the West. Continuing fears of a Soviet attack on Western Europe and public support for “firmness and increased ‘toughness’ in relations with Russia” then led Truman to push for a rearmed West German state and an Atlantic collective security alliance.

In May 1949, the United States, Britain, and France ended their occupation of Germany and approved the creation of the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). A month earlier, ten Western Europe nations had signed the North Atlantic Treaty, establishing a military alliance with the United States and Canada in which “an armed attack against one or more of them . . . shall be considered an attack against them all.” After overwhelming Senate approval, the United States

officially joined the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, marking the formal end of America's long tradition of avoiding entangling alliances abroad.

Truman was convinced that if NATO had been in existence in 1914 and 1939, the world would have been spared two disastrous wars. Accordingly, he spurred Congress to authorize \$1.3 billion for military assistance to NATO nations and authorized the stationing of four American army divisions in Europe as the nucleus of the NATO armed force. The Soviet Union responded by creating the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) in 1949, by exploding its own atomic bomb that same year, and by forming an Eastern bloc military alliance, the Warsaw Pact, in 1955. The United States and Soviet Union had divided Europe into two armed camps (see Map 26.1).

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) U.S.-led political and military alliance against the Soviet Union



Map 26.1 The Postwar Division of Europe

The wartime dispute between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies over Poland's future hardened after World War II into a Cold War that split Europe into competing American and Soviet spheres of influence. Across an "iron curtain," NATO countries faced the Warsaw Pact nations.

The Cold War in Asia

Moscow-Washington hostility also carved Asia into contending camps. The Russians created a sphere of influence in Manchuria, the United States denied Moscow a role in postwar Japan, and the two superpowers partitioned a helpless Korea.

As the head of the U.S. occupation forces in Japan, General Douglas MacArthur oversaw the country's transformation from an empire in ruins into a prosperous democracy. In 1952 the occupation ended, but a military security treaty allowed the United States to retain its Japanese bases and brought Japan under the American "nuclear umbrella." In further pursuit of containment, the United States helped crush a procommunist insurgency in the Philippines and aided French efforts to reestablish colonial rule in Indochina (Vietnam, Laos [LAH-oss], and Cambodia [kam-BOH-dee-uh]), despite American declarations in favor of national self-determination and against imperialism.

In China, however, U.S. efforts to block communism failed. The Truman administration first tried to mediate the civil war between the nationalist government of Jiang Jieshi (jyang je-SHIRRS) and the communist forces of **Mao Zedong** (MA-oh zay-DONGS), hoping to arrange a coalition government that would end the bloody conflict raging since the 1930s. It also sent nearly \$3 billion in aid to the nationalists between 1945 and 1949. But American dollars could not prevent the surrender of Jiang's armies to Mao's forces or the collapse of the nationalists' corrupt regime, whose remnants fled to the island of Taiwan.

Mao's establishment of the communist People's Republic of China shocked Americans. The most populous nation in the world, seen as a counterforce to Asian communism and a market for American trade, had become "Red China." Although Truman blamed Jiang's defeat on his failure to reform China, most Americans were unconvinced. China's "fall" particularly embittered conservatives who believed that America's future lay in Asia, not Europe.

In September 1949, as the "Who lost China" debate raged, the president announced that the Soviet Union had exploded an atomic bomb. The loss of their nuclear monopoly shattered Americans' illusions of invincibility and increased their fear of communism.

Ordinary Americans sought safety in civil defense. Public schools held air-raid drills, teaching students to "duck and cover"—dive under their desks and shield their eyes against atomic blasts. Four million Americans volunteered to be Sky Watchers, looking for Soviet planes. More than a million purchased or constructed their own family bomb shelters. Those who could not afford a bomb shelter were advised by the Federal Civil Defense Administration to "jump in any handy ditch or gutter . . . bury your face in your arms . . . never lose your head."

In January 1950, stung by charges that he was soft on communism, Truman ordered the development of a fusion-based hydrogen bomb (H-bomb), hundreds of times more powerful than an atomic bomb. In November 1952, the United States exploded its first H-bomb in the Marshall Islands, projecting a radioactive cloud 25 miles into the atmosphere and blasting a canyon a mile long and 175 feet deep in the ocean floor. Nine months later, the Soviets detonated their own hydrogen bomb. The balance of terror escalated.

So, too, did nuclear-generated environmental and health problems. Nuclear tests left minimally protected U.S. soldiers and South Pacific islanders exposed to

Mao Zedong Chinese revolutionary whose forces took control of China in 1949

National Security Paper 68 (NSC-68) Blueprint for Cold War; called for military buildup, H-bomb, and worldwide containment

radiation, and radioactive debris from atomic tests contaminated vast areas of Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and Washington.

In April 1950, a presidentially appointed committee issued a top-secret review of defense policy. The report, **National Security Paper 68 (NSC-68)**, emphasized the Soviet Union's aggressive intentions and military strength. To counter the Soviets' "design for world domination," NSC-68 called for a vast American military buildup, a large standing army, and a quadrupling of the defense budget to wage a global struggle against communism. By the end of 1950, Truman would order the implementation of NSC-68 and triple the defense budget.

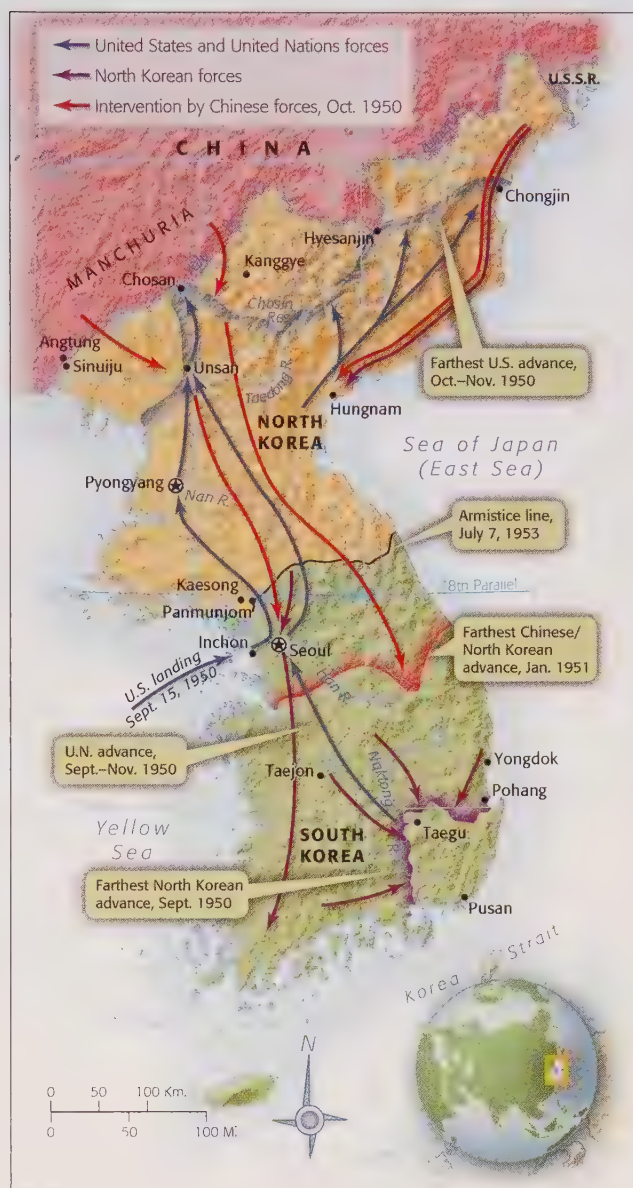
The Korean War, 1950–1953

After World War II, the Soviet Union and United States temporarily divided Korea at the thirty-eighth parallel for purposes of military occupation. The dividing line solidified into a political frontier between the Soviet-backed People's Democratic Republic in North Korea and the American-supported Republic of Korea, each claiming the sole right to rule Korea.

On June 24, 1950, North Korean troops swept across the thirty-eighth parallel to attack South Korea. Truman saw the invasion as Soviet-directed aggression. He never doubted that Stalin was testing American will. Mindful of the failure of appeasement at Munich in 1938, Truman said that failure to act would lead to a bloody "third world war." Having been accused of "selling out" Eastern Europe and "losing" China, Truman needed to prove he could stand up to "the Reds."

Without consulting Congress, Truman ordered air and naval forces to Korea from their bases in Japan on June 27. That same day he asked the United Nations to authorize action to repel the invasion. The Soviet delegate was boycotting the Security Council to protest the UN's unwillingness to seat a representative from Mao's China, and Truman gained approval for a UN "police action" to restore South Korea's border. He appointed General Douglas MacArthur to command the UN effort and ordered American ground troops into what became the **Korean War**. The Cold War had turned hot.

North Korean forces initially routed the disorganized American and South Korean troops. Then, in mid-September, with UN forces cornered on the



Map 26.2 The Korean War, 1950–1953

The experience of fighting an undeclared and limited war for the limited objective of containing communism confused the generation of Americans who had just fought an all-out war for the total defeat of the Axis.

Interactive Map

Korean War War with communist North Korea to contain the spread of communism in Asia

southeastern tip of the Korean peninsula, struggling to avoid being pushed into the sea, MacArthur's troops landed at Inchon (**in-CHAHN**) in a brilliant amphibious maneuver. Within two weeks, U.S. and South Korean forces drove the North Koreans back across the thirty-eighth parallel. Basking in victory, MacArthur persuaded Truman to let him go beyond the UN mandate to repel aggression and to cross the border to liberate all of Korea from communism.

As UN troops approached the Yalu River—the boundary between Korea and China—the Chinese warned that they would not “sit back with folded hands and let the Americans come to the border.” Dismissing the threat as “hot air,” MacArthur deployed his forces in a thin line below the river. On November 25 thirty-three Chinese divisions (about three hundred thousand men) counterattacked, driving stunned UN forces back below the thirty-eighth parallel. By March 1951, the fighting was stabilized at roughly the original dividing line between the two Koreas (see Map 26.2 on previous page).

Stalemated, Truman reversed course and sought a negotiated peace based on the original objective of restoring the integrity of South Korea. MacArthur rocked the boat, however, urging that he be allowed to seek total victory even at the risk of an all-out war with China. Truman refused. He sought a limited war for a limited objective: to hold the line in Korea. But MacArthur would not accept a stalemate. When he bluntly and repeatedly criticized Truman's limited war—the “appeasement of Communism”—the president fired the general to protect civilian control of the military.

Public opinion, however, backed the general. To Americans accustomed to unconditional victory, the very idea of limited war was baffling. Mounting casualties added anger to the mix. Despite warnings from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that MacArthur's proposals would result in “the wrong war at the wrong place in the wrong time and with the wrong enemy,” a growing number of Americans listened sympathetically to Republican charges that communist agents controlled American policy.

CHECKING IN

- The Soviet Union moved quickly to establish control over Eastern Europe, as Truman and Stalin's mutual distrust grew.
- The Truman administration adopted containment as the keystone of its foreign policy; the Truman Doctrine in effect made the United States a global policeman.
- The Marshall Plan helped rebuild Western Europe, including Germany but not the Soviet Union.
- The Berlin crisis brought the Cold War very close to the boiling point.
- NSC-68, a top-secret plan, proposed putting the United States on a permanent war footing.
- The Korean War propelled the United States into Asian politics and intensified charges of Soviet influence on American foreign policy.

Truman, meanwhile, found himself bogged down in Korea, unable to win a victory or craft a peace. After two more years of fighting, the two sides reached an armistice in July 1953 that left Korea divided. The “limited” conflict cost the United States 54,246 lives (about 33,700 of them battlefield deaths) with another 103,284 wounded, as well as financial losses of some \$54 billion. The Chinese lost nine hundred thousand men, and the two Korean armies lost eight hundred thousand. As in World War II, massive U.S. “carpet bombing” killed at least a million civilians and left North Korea looking like a moonscape.

The Korean War had major consequences. It accelerated implementation of NSC-68 and the expansion of the containment doctrine into a global commitment. From 1950 to 1953, defense spending zoomed from \$13 billion to \$60 billion—from one-third to two-thirds of the entire federal budget—and the American atomic stockpile mushroomed from 150 to 750 nuclear warheads. The United States acquired new bases around the world, committed itself to rearm West Germany, and joined a mutual-defense pact with Australia and New Zealand. Increased military aid flowed to Jiang Jieshi on Taiwan and to France's fight against communist insurgents in Indochina.

Truman's intervention in Korea preserved a precarious balance of power in Asia and underscored the administration's commitment to the

anticommunist struggle. Containment, originally advanced to justify U.S. aid to Greece and Turkey, had become the ideological foundation for a major war in Korea and, ominously, for a deepening U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Truman's actions enhanced the powers of an already powerful presidency and set the precedent for later undeclared wars. They also helped spark an economic boom, added fuel to a second Red Scare, and fostered Cold War attitudes that lasted long after the war ended.

THE TRUMAN ADMINISTRATION AT HOME, 1945–1952

What effect did the Cold War have on Truman's domestic program?

The Cold War profoundly changed the United States for better and for worse. It weakened the nation's commitment to civil liberties while propelling research in medicine and science that, for the most part, made lives longer and better. It spurred more than a quarter of a century of economic growth and prosperity, the longest such period in American history. That, along with a vast expansion of higher education, enabled many Americans to become middle class, diminishing support for federal regulation of business and the expansion of the welfare state. The Cold War context largely determined the domestic record of Truman as well as of Presidents Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy.

Truman's Domestic Program

Americans' hunger for the fruits of affluence left them little appetite for extension of the New Deal. Truman's only major domestic accomplishment in the Seventy-ninth Congress was the Employment Act of 1946. It committed the federal government to ensuring economic growth and established the Council of Economic Advisers to confer with the president and formulate policies for maintaining employment, production, and purchasing power. Congress, however, gutted both the goal of full employment and the enhanced executive powers to achieve that objective.

Congressional eagerness to dismantle wartime controls worsened the nation's chief economic problem: inflation. Consumer demand outran the supply of goods, putting intense pressure on prices. The Office of Price Administration (OPA) continued to set price controls after the war, but food producers, manufacturers, and retailers opposed controls strenuously. Many consumers favored preserving the OPA, but others saw the agency as a symbol of irksome wartime regulation. In June 1946, when Congress passed a bill that extended the OPA's life but removed its powers, Truman vetoed the bill. Within a week, food costs rose 16 percent, and the price of beef doubled.

Congress passed, and Truman signed, a second bill extending price controls in weakened form. Protesting any price controls, however, farmers and meat producers threatened to withhold food from the market. Observing that "meatless voters are opposition voters," Truman lifted controls on food prices just before the November 1946 midterm elections. When Democrats fared poorly anyway, Truman

ended all price controls. By then, the consumer price index had jumped nearly 25 percent since the end of the war.

Sharp price increases and shrinking paychecks goaded organized labor to demand higher wages. In 1946 alone, more than 4.5 million men and women went on strike. After a United Mine Workers walkout paralyzed the economy for forty days, President Truman ordered government seizure of the mines. A week later the miners returned to work, after Truman pressured owners to grant most of the demands. Six months later the drama repeated itself. In spring 1946 railway engineers and trainmen struck, shutting down the railway system. Truman exploded. “If you think I’m going to sit here and let you tie up this whole country,” the president shouted at the heads of the two unions, “you’re crazy as hell!” In May, Truman asked Congress for authority to draft workers who struck in vital industries. Before he could finish his speech, the unions gave in. Still, Truman’s threat alienated labor leaders.

By fall 1946, Truman had angered most major interest groups; polls showed that less than one-third of Americans approved of his performance. “To err is Truman,” some glibed. Summing up public discontent, Republicans asked, “Had enough?” In the 1946 elections they captured twenty-five governorships and, for the first time since 1928, won control of Congress.

The public mood reflected more than just economic discontent; it also revealed a deep current of fear. An NBC Radio program depicted a nuclear attack on Chicago in which most people died instantly. There was much talk of urban dispersal—resettling people in small communities in the country’s vast open spaces—and of how to protect oneself in a nuclear attack. The end of World War II had brought an uneasy peace.

The Eightieth Congress, 1947–1948

Many Republicans in the Eightieth Congress interpreted the 1946 elections as a mandate to reverse the New Deal. The Republican-controlled Congress defeated Democratic bills to raise the minimum wage and to provide federal funds for education and housing.

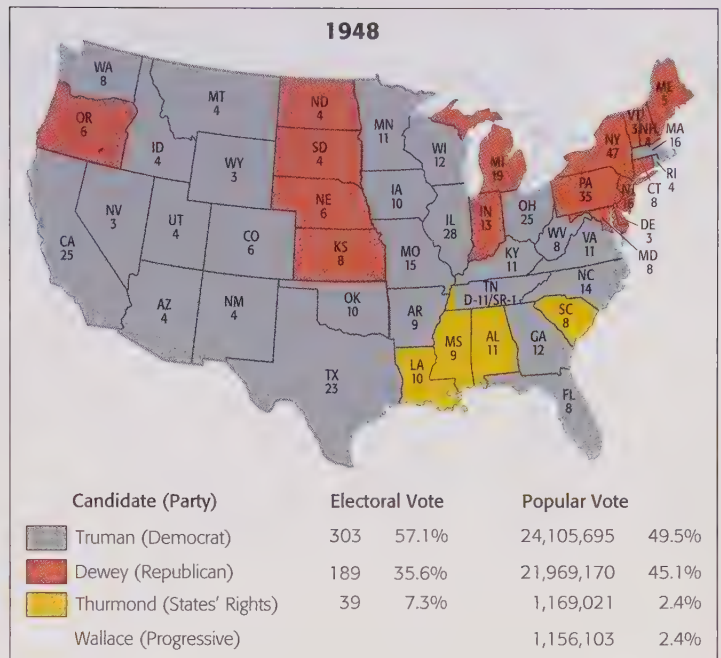
Truman and the conservatives waged their major battle over the pro-union Wagner Act of 1935 (see Chapter 24). Postwar strikes had whipped up a national consensus for curbing union power. In 1947, Congress passed the **Taft-Hartley Act** (the Labor-Management Relations Act), which barred the closed shop—a workplace where only union members could be hired—and permitted the president to call a sixty-day cooling-off period to delay any strike that might endanger national safety or health. Unions termed the law a “slave labor bill” and demanded a presidential veto. Truman did veto the measure, but Congress easily overrode the veto.

Truman, however, had taken a major step toward regaining organized labor’s support and reforging FDR’s New Deal coalition. Now an unabashed liberal, Truman urged Congress to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and to provide federal aid to education and housing, national health insurance, and high farm-price supports. To woo ethnic voters of Eastern European descent, Truman railed against Soviet communism; and to court Jewish-American voters, he expressed his deep sympathy toward Holocaust survivors and extended diplomatic recognition to the new state of Israel within hours of its establishment in May 1948.

Taft-Hartley Act Measure that limited the power of labor unions

Still, Truman's chances for victory dimmed as southern segregationists, alarmed by the president's support for civil rights, bolted the Democrats and nominated Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina as the candidate of the States' Rights ("Dixiecrat") party. Further diminishing Truman's chances, left-wing Democrats joined with communists to launch a new Progressive Party headed by former vice president Henry A. Wallace. To capitalize on Democratic divisions, Republicans played it safe, nominating the moderate governor of New York, Thomas E. Dewey, for president. Confident of victory, Dewey ran a complacent campaign designed to offend the fewest people. Truman, in contrast, campaigned aggressively, blasting the "no-good, do-nothing" Republicans as "gluttons of privilege." Pollsters applauded Truman's spunk but predicted a Dewey victory.

Instead, the president won the biggest Electoral College upset in U.S. history (see Map 26.3). The Progressives and Dixiecrats, ironically, helped Truman. Their radicalism kept most moderates safely in the Democratic fold. Most importantly, Truman succeeded as the defender of the New Deal against the party of Herbert Hoover and the depression. Accordingly, the Roosevelt coalition—organized labor, farmers, urban ethnics, blacks, and most white southerners—held together one more time.



Map 26.3 The Election of 1948



Interactive Map

The Fair Deal

Despite his slim victory, Truman proposed a vast liberal agenda—the **Fair Deal**—that included civil rights, national health-care legislation, and federal aid to education. Unlike New Deal liberalism, the Fair Deal counted on continual economic growth. An expanding economic pie would mean a bigger piece for most Americans and more tax revenue for the government.

Despite prosperity, the bipartisan conservative coalition of northern Republicans and southern Democrats, which had largely controlled Congress since 1938, rejected the Fair Deal. While extending some existing programs, such as the minimum wage and Social Security, and authorizing the construction of eight hundred thousand units of low-income housing, Congress would go no further. Special interest groups, such as the American Medical Association and the National Association of Manufacturers, lobbied extensively against what they called “creeping socialism,” and prosperity sapped public enthusiasm for liberal initiatives. By 1950, Truman was once again subordinating domestic issues to foreign policy.

Fair Deal Truman's unsuccessful proposed extension of the New Deal

CHECKING IN

- Economic woes, bruising labor battles, and Cold-War anxieties led to widespread disapproval of Truman's presidency.
- The Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress blocked Truman's proposals and reduced organized labor's power by passing the Taft-Hartley Act.
- Controversy split the Democratic Party in 1948 as segregationist southerners walked out to form the Dixiecrats.
- In a stunning upset, Truman defeated Thomas Dewey to win reelection in 1948.
- The Fair Deal was Truman's attempt to continue and enlarge the New Deal; however, Congress rejected virtually all of its measures.

THE POLITICS OF ANTICOMMUNISM

How did anticommunist sentiment affect American society and shape Eisenhower's presidency?

As the Cold War worsened, some Americans concluded that the roots of the nation's foreign difficulties lay in domestic treason and subversion. How else could the communists have taken China and built an atomic bomb? Millions of fearful Americans would eventually enlist in a crusade that would find scapegoats for the nation's problems and equate dissent with disloyalty.

Similar intolerance had prevailed in the Red Scare of 1919–1920 (see Chapter 22), but the Second Red Scare lasted longer, affected more people, and had greater consequences. It took root in the creation of the House Committee on Un-American Activities—later called the **House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)** (**HYOO-ack**)—in 1938 to ferret out fascists, but it quickly became a platform for right-wing denunciations of the New Deal as a communist plot. After World War II, mounting numbers of mainstream Democrats and Republicans climbed aboard the anti-Red bandwagon.

The **Second Red Scare** influenced both governmental and personal actions. Millions of Americans were subjected to loyalty oaths and security investigations after the war. Anticommunist extremism destroyed the Left, undermined labor militancy, and discredited liberalism. It spawned a “silent generation” of college students and ensured anticommunist foreign-policy rigidity.

House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)

“Red-hunting” House committee

Second Red Scare Postwar anticommunist hysteria that cast a cloud of suspicion over government, academia, and even Hollywood

Loyalty and Security

The U.S. Communist Party claimed eighty thousand members during World War II, and no one knew how many occupied sensitive government positions. In mid-1945, a raid of the offices of a procommunist magazine revealed that classified documents had been stolen from government offices. Ten months later, the Canadian government exposed a major spy network that had passed American atomic secrets to the Soviets during the war. Republicans accused the administration of being “soft on communism.”

In March 1947, Truman issued Executive Order 9835 establishing the Federal Employee Loyalty Program to root out subversives in the government. It authorized the attorney general to prepare a list of “subversive” organizations and made association with such groups grounds for dismissal. Those suspected could neither face their accusers nor require investigators to reveal sources.

Mere criticism of American foreign policy could result in an accusation of disloyalty. People lost their jobs because they liked foreign films, associated with radical friends, or favored the unionization of federal workers. Of the 4.7 million jobholders and applicants who underwent loyalty checks by 1952, 560 were fired or denied jobs, and several thousand resigned or withdrew their applications. The probe uncovered no evidence of subversion or espionage, but it did spread fear among government employees.

The Anticommunist Crusade

The very existence of a federal loyalty probe fed mounting anticommunist hysteria and legitimized a witch-hunt for subversives. Universities banned controversial speakers,



The Michael Barson Collection / Past Perfect

The Red Menace, 1949

Although Hollywood generally avoided overtly political films, it released a few dozen explicitly anticommunist films in the postwar era. Depicting American communists as vicious hypocrites, if not hardened criminals, Cold War movies were an effort to protect Hollywood's imperiled public image after HUAC's widely publicized investigation of the movie industry.

and popular magazines ran articles like "Reds Are After Your Child." By the end of Truman's term, thirty-nine states had created loyalty programs. Few had any procedural safeguards. Schoolteachers, college professors, and state and city employees throughout the nation signed loyalty oaths or lost their jobs.

In 1947, HUAC began hearings to expose communist influence in American life. HUAC's probes blurred distinctions between dissent and disloyalty, between radicalism and subversion. People who refused to answer HUAC questions often lost their livelihood. Labor unions expelled communist members and avoided progressive causes, concentrating on securing better pay and benefits and becoming bureaucratic special-interest groups. HUAC also left its mark on the entertainment industry. When several prominent film directors and screenwriters refused to cooperate in 1947, HUAC had them cited for contempt and sent to federal prison. Blacklists in Hollywood and in radio broadcasting barred the employment of anyone with a slightly questionable past, thereby silencing many talented people.

The 1948 presidential campaign fed national anxieties. Truman lambasted Henry Wallace as a Stalinist dupe and the GOP dubbed the Democrats “the party of treason.” To blunt such accusations, the Justice Department prosecuted eleven top leaders of the American Communist Party under the Smith Act of 1940, which outlawed any conspiracy advocating the overthrow of the government. In 1951, the Supreme Court upheld the Smith Act’s constitutionality, declaring that Congress could curtail freedom of speech if national security demanded such restrictions. Ironically, the Communist Party was fading into obscurity at the very time that politicians were magnifying the threat it posed. By 1950, its membership had shrunk to less than thirty thousand.

McCarthyism

Nothing set off more alarms about the diabolical Red conspiracy in the federal government than the matter of Alger (AL-jurr) Hiss and Whittaker Chambers, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. That an eminent official such as Hiss had been disloyal intensified the widespread fears of a communist underground in the government. Then, a month after Hiss’s perjury conviction, another spy case shocked Americans. In February 1950, the British arrested Klaus Fuchs (fooks), a German-born scientist involved in the Manhattan Project, for passing atomic secrets to the Soviets. Fuchs’s confession led to the arrest of two Americans, **Ethel and Julius Rosenberg**, as co-conspirators. The Rosenbergs insisted that they were victims of anti-Semitism and were being prosecuted for their leftist beliefs. But in March 1951, a jury found them guilty of conspiring to commit espionage, and in June 1953 they each died in the electric chair—the first American civilians to lose their lives for espionage. The release of classified documents in the 1990s, from the archives of the former Soviet Union, confirmed that Hiss did pass secret information to the Soviets and that Julius Rosenberg, who described himself as a “soldier of Stalin,” was part of a spy ring that gave the USSR data on America’s atomic bomb project.

At this point, some Americans could not separate fact from fantasy. For them, only conspiracy could explain U.S. setbacks. Frustrated by unexpected failure in the 1948 election, Republicans eagerly exploited the fearful mood and accused the “Commiecrats” of selling out America.

Then, in February 1950, Republican senator **Joseph R. McCarthy** of Wisconsin, desperate for an issue on which to run for reelection in 1952, boldly told a West Virginia audience that communists in the State Department had betrayed America. “I have here in my hand a list of 205,” McCarthy reported as he waved a laundry list, “who would appear to be either card carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist Party.” McCarthy subsequently lowered his number to 57, then to 10, and then to one “policy risk.” McCarthy never released any names or proof. A Senate committee found McCarthy’s accusations “a fraud and a hoax,” but he persisted, making so many accusations that the facts could never catch up. “McCarthyism” became a synonym for personal attacks on individuals by means of indiscriminate allegations and unsubstantiated charges.

As the Korean War dragged on, McCarthy’s efforts to “root out the skunks” escalated. He ridiculed Secretary of State Dean Acheson as the “Red Dean” and charged George Marshall with having “aided and abetted a communist conspiracy so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man.”

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg

Julius Rosenberg spied for the Soviets and was executed, along with his wife, in 1953

Joseph R. McCarthy

Redbaiting senator from Wisconsin

McCarthyism especially appealed to midwestern Republicans opposed to the welfare state and restrictions on business. For them, anticommunism was a weapon of revenge against liberals. McCarthy also won a devoted following among blue-collar workers and among Catholic ethnics, who sought acceptance as “100 percent Americans” through a show of anticommunist zeal. Countless Americans also shared McCarthy’s scorn for State Department liberals as the “bright young men who are born with silver spoons in their mouths.” And his conspiracy theory offered a simple answer to the perplexing questions of the Cold War: The fault is in Washington.

McCarthy’s political power rested on both the Republican establishment and Democrats fearful of antagonizing him. In the 1950 elections, when he helped Republicans defeat Democrats who had denounced him, McCarthy appeared invincible. Few dared incur his wrath.

Over Truman’s veto, Congress in 1950 adopted the **McCarran Internal Security Act**, which required organizations deemed communist by the attorney general to register with the Department of Justice. The McCarran Act authorized the arrest and detention during a national emergency of “any person as to whom there is reason to believe might engage in acts of espionage or sabotage.” The McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, also adopted over a presidential veto, maintained the quota system that gave immigrants from northern and western Europe 85 percent of available slots, although it did end Asian exclusion. The new law also strengthened the attorney general’s authority to exclude or deport aliens suspected of supporting communism.

McCarran Internal Security Act Required all alleged communist organizations to register with the government

Dwight D. Eisenhower Thirty-fourth president; two-term presidency marked by moderation and stability

The Election of 1952

In 1952, public apprehension about the loyalty of government employees combined with frustration over the Korean stalemate to sink Democratic hopes to their lowest level since the 1920s. Truman’s approval rating plummeted to 23 percent, the lowest ever recorded by a president. Popular resentment of Truman’s handling of the Korean War and revelations of bribery by his political associates gave the GOP ammunition for charging the Democrats with “plunder at home, and blunder abroad.”

With Truman too unpopular to seek reelection, dispirited Democrats drafted Governor Adlai E. Stevenson of Illinois. But Stevenson could not dissociate himself from Truman, and his lofty speeches did not stir the average voter. Above all, Stevenson could not overcome the sentiment that twenty years of Democratic rule was enough.

The GOP nominated the hugely popular war hero **Dwight D. Eisenhower**.



Ike and Dick

The Republican ticket of Dwight D. Eisenhower and Richard M. Nixon won the 1952 election by capitalizing on frustration over the stalemated Korean War, the fear of communist subversion, and revelations of favoritism and kickbacks on government contracts by the Truman administration.

Although essentially apolitical, Eisenhower answered the call of the moderate wing of the Republican Party and accepted the nomination. “Ike” chose as his running mate Richard M. Nixon, who had won a seat in the Senate in 1950 by redbaiting his opponent, Helen Gahagan Douglas, as “pink right down to her underwear.”

Eisenhower and Nixon proved unbeatable. With a captivating grin and an unimpeachable record of public service, Eisenhower projected both personal warmth and the vigorous authority associated with military command. At the same time, Nixon kept public apprehensions at the boiling point. Accusing the Democrats of treason, he charged that a Democratic victory would bring “more Alger Hisses, more atomic spies.”

Less than two weeks before the election, Eisenhower dramatically pledged to “go to Korea” to end the stalemated war. It worked: The Republican ticket took 55 percent of the ballots. Ike cracked the Solid South, carrying thirty-nine states. In addition, enough Republicans rode his coattails to give the GOP narrow control of both houses of Congress.

The Downfall of Joseph McCarthy

hang himself. He did.

In 1954, McCarthy accused the army of harboring communist spies, and the army charged McCarthy with using his influence to gain preferential treatment for a staff member who had been drafted. The resulting nationally televised Senate investigation, begun in April 1954, brought McCarthy down. A national audience witnessed McCarthy’s boorish behavior firsthand on television. His dark scowl, endless interruptions, and disregard for the rights of others repelled many viewers. In June, when McCarthy smeared the reputation of a young lawyer assisting Joseph Welch, the army counsel, Welch struck back: “Until this moment, Senator, I think I really never gauged your cruelty or your recklessness. . . . Have you no sense of decency?” The gallery burst into applause.

The spell of the inquisitor broken, the Senate in December 1954 censured the Wisconsin senator for contemptuous behavior. This powerful rebuke demolished McCarthy as a political force. In 1957, he died from an alcohol-related illness. Still, the paranoia he exploited lingered. Congress annually funded the House Un-American Activities Committee. In addition, state and local governments continued to require loyalty oaths from teachers.

McCarthyism also remained a rallying call of conservatives disenchanted with the postwar consensus. Young conservatives like William F. Buckley, Jr., and the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade continued to claim that domestic communism was a major subversive threat. The John Birch Society denounced Eisenhower as a conscious agent of the communist conspiracy and equated liberalism with treason. Although few saw all the lurking dangers that the John Birch Society did, Barry Goldwater, George Wallace, and Ronald Reagan, among others, used its anticommunist, antigovernment rhetoric to advantage. Stressing victory over communism, rather than its containment, the self-proclaimed “new conservatives” (or radical Right, as their opponents called them) criticized the “creeping socialism” of Eisenhower, advocated a return to traditional moral standards, and condemned the liberal rulings of the Supreme Court.

Although he despised Joseph McCarthy, Eisenhower feared battling the senator. Instead, he allowed McCarthy to grab plenty of rope in hopes that the demagogue would

“Modern Republicanism”

Most Americans in the 1950s did not venture that far Right. They voted for a president who would steer a moderate course and got what they wanted. Rarely in history has a president better fit the national mood than “Ike.” Exhausted by a quarter-century of upheaval, Americans craved stability and peace. And Eisenhower, projecting the image of a plain but good man, delivered.

Born on October 14, 1890, in Denison, Texas, Eisenhower grew up in Abilene, Kansas, in a poor, religious family. More athletic than studious, he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1915. In directing the Allied invasion of North Africa in 1942 and of western Europe in 1944, he revealed himself to be a brilliant war planner, respected for his managerial ability and talent for conciliation. Eisenhower’s approach to the presidency reflected his wartime leadership style. He concentrated on major matters, delegated authority, and worked to reconcile contending factions. His restrained view of presidential authority and his low-key style, combined with frequent fishing and golfing vacations, led Democrats to scoff at Eisenhower as a leader who “reigned but did not rule.”

The image of passivity, however, masked a “hidden-hand” presidency that enabled Eisenhower to work successfully behind the scenes. More pragmatic than ideological, the president wished to reduce taxes, contain inflation, and, when necessary, check downturns by stimulating the economy. After the Democrats retook Congress in 1954, Eisenhower supported extending social-security benefits, raising the minimum wage, adding 4 million workers to those eligible for unemployment benefits, and providing federally financed public housing for low-income families. He also approved construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, linking the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean, and creation of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In 1956, Eisenhower backed the largest and most expensive public-works program in American history: the Interstate Highway Act, authorizing construction of a 41,000-mile system of expressways that would soon snake across America, accelerating suburban growth, heightening dependence on imported oil, and contributing to urban decay and air pollution.

Republicans re-nominated Ike by acclamation in 1956, and voters gave him a landslide victory over Democrat Adlai Stevenson. With the GOP crowing, “Everything’s booming but the guns,” the president won by the greatest popular majority since FDR’s victory in 1936.

CHECKING IN

- Truman established the Federal Employee Loyalty Program while HUAC held a series of spectacular hearings to “root out” communism in American life.
- The cases of Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs, who were accused of spying for the Soviets, increased the public’s fear of communism at home.
- Senator Joseph R. McCarthy’s reckless anticommunism made him the most feared man in America; he self-destructed in 1954 in the televised Army-McCarthy hearings.
- In the 1952 presidential election, war hero Dwight D. Eisenhower was the easy victor; his laid-back style soothed frayed nerves.
- Pursuing a moderate course, “Ike” won reelection resoundingly in 1956.

THE COLD WAR CONTINUES

In what ways did Eisenhower continue Truman’s foreign policy, and in what ways did he change it?

Eisenhower essentially maintained Truman’s containment policy. Stalin’s death in 1953 and Eisenhower’s veiled threat to use nuclear weapons broke the Korean stalemate. The armistice signed in July 1953 set the boundary between North and South Korea once again at the thirty-eighth parallel. Some Americans claimed

that communist aggression had been thwarted and containment vindicated; others condemned the truce as peace without honor.

Ike and Dulles

John Foster Dulles

Eisenhower's secretary of state and anticommunist hard-liner

Eager to ease Cold War hostilities, Eisenhower first had to quiet the GOP right wing's clamor to roll back the Red tide. To do so, he chose as his secretary of state **John Foster Dulles (DULL-us)**, a rigid, humorless Presbyterian who advocated a holy war against "atheistic communism," backed by the threat of "instant, massive retaliation" with nuclear weapons. Dulles called for "liberation" of the captive peoples of Eastern Europe and for unleashing Jiang Jieshi against communist China. Believing that the Soviet Union understood only force, Dulles insisted on the necessity of "brinksmanship," the art of never backing down in a crisis, even at the risk of war.

Such saber rattling pleased the Right, but Eisenhower preferred conciliation, partly because he feared a nuclear war—the Soviet Union had tested its own hydrogen bomb in 1953. Eisenhower refused to translate Dulles's rhetoric into action. Aware of the limits of American power, the United States did nothing to check the Soviet interventions that crushed uprisings in East Germany (1953) and Hungary (1956).

As multimegaton thermonuclear weapons replaced atomic bombs in U.S. and Soviet arsenals, Eisenhower worked to reduce the probability of mutual annihilation. He proposed "atoms for peace," whereby both superpowers would contribute fissionable materials to a new UN agency for use in industrial projects. In the absence of a positive Soviet response, the government began construction of an electronic air defense system to provide early warning of a missile attack.

Work also began on commercial nuclear plants in the mid-1950s, promising electricity "too cheap to meter." However, most money continued to go for nuclear research that was military in nature. Radioactive fallout from atomic tests, especially the 1954 U.S. tests that spread strontium 90 over a wide area, heightened world concern about the nuclear-arms race.

In 1955, Eisenhower and Soviet leaders met in Geneva for the first East-West conference since World War II. Discussions produced no concrete plan for arms control, but mutual talk of "peaceful coexistence" led reporters to hail the "spirit of Geneva." In March 1958, Moscow suspended atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons, and the United States followed suit.

But the Cold War continued. Dulles negotiated mutual-defense pacts with forty-three nations. The United States' "New Look" defense program guaranteed "more bang for the buck" by emphasizing nuclear weapons and reducing conventional forces. It also spurred the Soviets to seek "more rubble for the ruble" by enlarging their nuclear stockpile.

Meanwhile, the focus of the Cold War shifted from Europe to the Third World, the largely nonwhite developing nations. There, the two superpowers waged war by proxy, using local guerrillas and military juntas. There, too, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) fought covert wars against those thought to imperil American interests.

CIA Covert Actions

Established in 1947 to conduct foreign intelligence gathering, the CIA soon began to carry out undercover operations to topple regimes friendly to communism.

By 1957, half its personnel and 80 percent of its budget were devoted to “covert action.” To woo influential foreign thinkers away from communism, the CIA also sponsored intellectual conferences and jazz concerts. It bankrolled anticommunist cultural events, subsidized magazines to publish articles supporting the United States, and recruited college students and businessmen traveling abroad as “fronts” in clandestine CIA activities.

In 1953, the CIA orchestrated a coup to overthrow the government of Iran. Fearing that the prime minister, who had nationalized oil fields, might open oil-rich Iran to the Soviets, the CIA replaced him with pro-American Shah Reza Pahlavi (REH-zah PAH-lah-vee). The United States thus gained a loyal ally on the Soviet border, and American oil companies prospered when the Shah made low-priced oil available to them. But Iranian hatred of America took root—a hostility that would haunt the United States a quarter-century later.

The CIA also intervened in Philippine elections in 1953 to ensure a pro-American government. The following year, a CIA-supported band of mercenaries in Guatemala overthrew the elected communist-influenced regime, which had seized land from the American-owned United Fruit Company. The new pro-American government restored United Fruit’s properties and trampled political opposition.

Troubles in the Third World

Eisenhower first followed Truman’s course of aiding France in its battle with Indochinese insurgents. When that failed, he pinned his hopes on the CIA-installed President Ngo Dinh Diem to keep South Vietnam an independent anticommunist nation tied to the United States. That policy, too, appeared to be faltering as he left office (to be further discussed in Chapter 28).

Eisenhower faced his greatest crisis in the Middle East. In 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser (gu-MAWL AB-dul NASS-er) came to power in Egypt, determined to modernize his nation. To woo him, the United States offered financing for a dam at Aswan (AS-wahn) to harness the Nile River. But when Nasser purchased arms from Czechoslovakia, John Foster Dulles canceled the loan, and Nasser nationalized the British-owned Suez Canal.

Viewing the canal as the lifeline of its empire, Britain planned to take it back by force. Supporting the British were France, which feared Arab nationalism in their Algerian colony, and Israel, which feared the Egyptian arms buildup. The three countries, America’s closest allies, coordinated an attack on Egypt in October 1956 without consulting Eisenhower. Ike fumed that the military action would drive the Arab world and its precious oil to the Russians. When Moscow threatened to intervene, Eisenhower forced his allies to withdraw their troops.

The **Suez crisis** had major consequences. It swelled Third World antiwestern sentiment, and the United States replaced Britain and France as the protector of Western interests in the Middle East. Determined to guarantee the flow of oil to the West, in 1957 the president announced the **Eisenhower Doctrine**, a proclamation that the United States would send military aid and, if necessary, troops to any Middle Eastern nation threatened by “communist aggression.”

Such interventions intensified anti-American feelings in Third World nations. Angry crowds in Peru and Venezuela spat at Vice President Nixon and stoned his car

Suez crisis Situation in which Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal, prompting Britain, France, and Israel to take military action

Eisenhower Doctrine Committed the United States to a policy of intervention in the Middle East

military-industrial complex

The U.S. arms industry, whose growing influence worried Eisenhower

in 1958. In 1959, Fidel Castro overturned a dictatorial regime in Cuba and confiscated American properties without compensation. A tougher blow struck on May 1, 1960, two weeks before a scheduled summit conference with Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev (**KROOSH-chef**), when the Soviets shot down a U.S. spy plane far inside their border. Khrushchev displayed the captured CIA U-2 pilot and photos taken of Soviet missile sites. Eisenhower refused to apologize, and the summit collapsed.

CHECKING IN

- Despite hard-line Dulles rhetoric, Eisenhower pursued a moderate Cold War course and avoided direct confrontation with the Soviet Union.
- The CIA conducted covert operations in Iran and Guatemala to overthrow elected governments not friendly enough to the United States.
- The Middle East remained a hot spot after the Suez crisis, and the Eisenhower Doctrine committed the United States to intervene there against “communist aggression.”
- In his farewell address, Eisenhower advised Americans to “guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence . . . by the military-industrial complex.”

The Eisenhower Legacy

Just before leaving office, Eisenhower offered Americans a farewell and a warning. The demands of national security, he stated, had produced the “conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry.” Swollen defense budgets had yoked American economic health to military expenditures, and military contracts had become the staff of life for research scholars, politicians, and America’s largest corporations. This combination of interests, Eisenhower believed, exerted enormous leverage and threatened the traditional subordination of the military in American life. “We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence . . . by the **military-industrial complex**. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.”

The president concluded that he had avoided war but that lasting peace was not in sight. Most scholars agreed. Eisenhower ended the Korean War, avoided direct intervention in Vietnam, initiated relaxing tensions with the Soviet Union, and suspended atmospheric nuclear testing. At the same time, he presided over an accelerating nuclear-arms race and a Cold War that encircled the globe. So, too, would his successor.

Chapter Summary

How did the policies of the United States and Soviet Union lead to the beginnings of the Cold War? (page 638)

The Soviet Union moved quickly to consolidate its hold over Eastern Europe. To Stalin, this policy was primarily defensive; to Truman, it was aggression. What was left of the World War II coalition vanished amid clouds of distrust. Containment became the bedrock of American foreign policy. The Truman Doctrine proclaimed the United States to be a global policeman, while the Marshall Plan helped rebuild Western Europe. NSC-68 placed the country on a permanent war footing and radically increased defense spending. The Korean War thrust the United States squarely into Asian politics.

KEY TERMS

George F. Kennan (p. 639)
 Truman Doctrine (p. 641)
 Marshall Plan (p. 641)
 Berlin airlift (p. 642)
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (p. 643)
 Mao Zedong (p. 644)
 National Security Paper 68 (NSC-68) (p. 645)
 Korean War (p. 645)

What effect did the Cold War have on Truman's domestic program? (page 647)

The Republican-controlled Eightieth Congress blocked most of Truman's proposals; it clipped labor's wings with the Taft-Hartley Act. In 1948, some segregationist southerners left the Democrats and formed their own "Dixiecrat" party. Truman overcame these obstacles and won a surprising reelection victory in 1948. Truman announced the Fair Deal, his attempt to continue and enlarge the New Deal, but virtually none of his new proposals became law.

How did anticommunist sentiment affect American society and shape Eisenhower's presidency? (page 650)

Fear of communism permeated American life. Highly publicized HUAC hearings seemed to reveal communists under every bed. Truman's Federal Employee Loyalty Program and the Hiss and Rosenberg cases intensified the public's jitteriness, thus setting the stage for the emergence of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. Republicans rode "McCarthyism" back to the seat of power in Washington; Dwight D. Eisenhower easily won the presidency in 1952. While tilting to the Right in favoring private corporations, the Eisenhower administration left New Deal reforms in place, expanded existing social-welfare benefits, and proposed construction of a vast interstate highway system.

In what ways did Eisenhower continue Truman's foreign policy, and in what ways did he change it? (page 655)

Despite the hard-line rhetoric of John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower followed a moderate, nonconfrontational policy in dealing with the Soviet Union. The domino theory led the United States to deeper involvement in Asia; meanwhile, the CIA secretly orchestrated coups in Iran and Guatemala. The Suez crisis underlined the volatile and dangerous nature of Middle Eastern politics, and the resulting Eisenhower Doctrine committed the United States to resisting Soviet influence in the region.

KEY TERMS continued

Taft-Hartley Act (p. 648)

Fair Deal (p. 649)

House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) (p. 650)

Second Red Scare (p. 650)

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg (p. 652)

Joseph R. McCarthy (p. 652)

McCarran Internal Security Act (p. 653)

Dwight D. Eisenhower (p. 653)

John Foster Dulles (p. 656)

Suez crisis (p. 657)

Eisenhower Doctrine (p. 657)

military-industrial complex (p. 658)



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CHAPTER 27

America at Midcentury

1945–1961

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Postwar Jitters

What were the main sources of the postwar economic expansion and affluence?

The Affluent Society

What, if any, were the negative consequences associated with economic growth and prosperity?

Prosperity and the Suburbs

How accurate is the image of 1950s suburban life as one of contentment, conservatism, and conformity?

Seeds of Disquiet

What actions by minorities and youth foretold the movements for social change to come in the 1960s?

The Other America

In what sense were there two Americas?

The Civil Rights Movement

What innovative strategies were developed by the civil rights movement in this era?



State Library and Archives of Florida

The Postwar Domestic Ideal

Like no one else, Jackie Robinson personified the accelerating momentum of the struggle against racial discrimination that emerged from World War II. While serving in the war, Robinson was acquitted of insubordination in a court-martial for re-

fusing to accept segregation on army buses. In 1947, he accepted an offer to play baseball for the Brooklyn Dodgers. The grandson of a slave had become the first African-American to play Major League Baseball in the twentieth century. He endured racist insults and bean balls, flying spikes and hate mail, even death threats from fans and

other players. But his dazzling play and dignified courage helped the Dodgers win the pennant, and Robinson was named Rookie of the Year.

Robinson became a symbol of progress in race relations and a spur to changes in the United States. In the wake of Robinson's success, professional football and other baseball teams also integrated. The popular press increasingly attacked prejudice, various cities and states passed laws against discrimination, the Supreme Court chipped away at the judicial foundations of segregation, the Truman administration proposed civil-rights legislation, and antiracism took its place in the agenda of liberalism. A new phase in the struggle to end racism in America had begun.

For most white Americans, however, economic growth and prosperity, and the Cold War, defined the postwar era. A new way of life, centered on family "togetherness" and consumption, became the American Dream. Yet Americans also worried about the arms race, and the atmospheric nuclear testing that pumped strontium 90, a cancer-causing chemical, into the world's environment. Fewer middle-class whites paid much attention to critics who railed against mainstream values in the postwar years.

A time of fundamental changes and of portents of yet greater change, the period from 1945 to 1961 brought the advent of an automated postindustrial society, the influence of television, the baby boom, the growth of suburbs and the Sun Belt, high-speed interstate highways, and an enormous internal migration. Midcentury America encompassed booming prosperity and persistent poverty, civil-rights triumphs and rampant racism, consensus and alienation. Much like Jackie Robinson breaking the color line in Major League Baseball, it showcased what we were, and what we would become.

POSTWAR JITTERS

What were the main sources of the postwar economic expansion and affluence?

Americans hailed V-J Day and looked forward to "bringing the boys home." However, the steep decline in defense spending and factory jobs caused many to fear demobilization. Strife between labor and management, as well as inflation and shortages, intensified the anxiety. But by 1947, consumer spending and the Cold War had begun to spur a quarter-century of economic growth and prosperity, the longest such period in American history.

Demobilization and Reconversion

When the war ended, GIs and civilians alike wanted all those who had served overseas "home alive in '45." Troops demanding transport ships barraged Congress with threats of "no boats, no votes." On a single day in December 1945, sixty thousand postcards arrived at the White House with the message "Bring the Boys Home by Christmas." Truman bowed to popular demand, and by 1948 American military strength had dropped from 12 million at war's end to just 1.5 million.

Chronology



1944	Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill)
1946	ENIAC, the first electronic computer, begins operation
1947	Levittown, New York, development started; Jackie Robinson breaks Major League Baseball's color line; President's Committee on Civil Rights issues <i>To Secure These Rights</i>
1948	Bell Labs develops the transistor
1950	David Riesman, <i>The Lonely Crowd</i>
1953	Earl Warren appointed chief justice; Operation Wetback begins
1954	<i>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka</i> ; <i>Father Knows Best</i> begins on TV
1955	Salk polio vaccine developed; AFL-CIO merger; Elvis Presley ignites rock and roll; James Dean stars in <i>Rebel Without a Cause</i> ; Montgomery bus boycott begins
1956	Interstate Highway Act
1957	Little Rock school-desegregation crisis; Soviet Union launches <i>Sputnik</i> ; peak of baby boom (4.3 million births); Southern Christian Leadership Conference founded
1958	National Defense Education Act; National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) founded
1960	Sit-ins begin; suburban population almost equals that of central city
1961	Freedom Rides begin

Returning veterans faced readjustment problems intensified by a soaring divorce rate and a drastic housing shortage. As war plants closed, moreover, veterans and civilians feared the return of mass unemployment and economic depression. Defense spending plummeted from \$76 billion in 1945 to under \$20 billion in 1946, and more than a million defense jobs vanished.

By the end of the decade more women were working outside the home than during World War II. They took jobs in traditional women's fields, especially office work and sales, to pay for family needs. Although the postwar economy created new openings for women in the labor market, many public figures urged women to seek fulfillment at home. Popular culture romanticized married bliss and demonized career women as a threat to social stability.

GI Bill Act that allowed education and home ownership for veterans

The GI Bill of Rights

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly called the GI Bill of Rights or **GI Bill**, was designed to forestall the expected recession by easing veterans back into the work force, as well as to reward the "soldier boys" and reduce their fears of female competition. The GI Bill gave veterans priority for many jobs, occupational guidance, and, if need be, fifty-two weeks of unemployment benefits. It also provided low-interest loans to returning GIs who were starting businesses or buying homes, helping to fuel a baby boom, suburbanization, and a record demand for new goods and services.

Most vitally in the long run, the government promised to pay for up to four years of further education or job training for veterans. In 1946, flush with generous stipends, 1.5 million veterans were attending college, spurring a huge increase

in higher education and the creation of many new state and community colleges. Veterans made up over half of all college students in 1947.

To make room for the millions of GIs pursuing higher education after the war, many colleges limited the percentage of women admitted or barred students from out of state. As a result, the percentage of female college graduates dropped from 40 percent in 1949 to 25 percent in 1950. By then, most potential women students were the working wives of the veterans who took advantage of the GI Bill to go to college.

The GI Bill democratized higher education. By 1956, nearly 10 million veterans had used the GI Bill to enroll in vocational training programs and colleges. No longer a citadel of privilege, universities awarded twice as many degrees in 1950 as in 1940, propelling millions of veterans into the middle class. Two decades later, these more affluent and educated veterans expected their children to follow suit. Higher education became an accepted part of the American Dream.

The Economic Boom Begins

In addition to the assistance given returning servicemen, a 1945 tax cut of \$6 billion spurred corporate investment in new factories and equipment and helped produce an economic boom. Further kindling postwar prosperity, Americans spent much of the \$135 billion they had saved from wartime work and service pay to satisfy their desire to consume, causing sales of homes, cars, and appliances to skyrocket. Scores of new products—televisions, high-fidelity phonographs, filter cigarettes, automatic transmissions, freezers, and air conditioners—became hallmarks of the middle-class lifestyle.

The **Bretton Woods agreement** (1944) among the Allies set the stage for the United States to become the economic leader of the noncommunist world. In addition to valuing (“pegging”) other currencies in relation to the dollar, the Bretton Woods agreement created several institutions to oversee international trade and finance: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the World Bank. Since the United States largely controlled and funded these powerful economic institutions, they gave the United States an especially favorable position in international trade and finance.

With many nations in ruins, American firms could import raw materials cheaply; with little competition from other industrial countries, they could increase exports to record levels. U.S. economic dominance also resulted from wartime advances in science and technology, which significantly increased the productivity of American workers, and led to revolutionary developments in such industries as electronics and plastics.

Bretton Woods agreement

Created the IMF, GATT, and World Bank; secured U.S. dominance in world finance

CHECKING IN

- More than a million defense jobs vanished after the war, sparking fears that rapid demobilization would lead to recession.
- The GI Bill helped veterans buy homes and start businesses; it sent millions to college and helped propel even more into the middle class.
- The influx of veterans democratized higher education.
- Pent-up demand triggered a consumer boom, while the Bretton Woods agreement established the United States's leadership in international trade and finance.

THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY

What, if any, were the negative consequences associated with economic growth and prosperity?

In 1958, the economist John Kenneth Galbraith published *The Affluent Society*, a study of postwar America whose title reflected the broad-based prosperity that made the 1950s seem the fulfillment of the American Dream. By the end

of the decade, about 60 percent of American families owned homes; 75 percent, cars; and 87 percent, at least one TV. Government spending, a huge upsurge in productivity, and steadily increasing consumer demand pushed the gross national product (GNP) up 50 percent. The United States achieved the world's highest living standard ever. By 1960, the average worker's income, adjusted for inflation, was 35 percent higher than in 1945. With just 6 percent of the world's population, the United States produced and consumed nearly half of everything made and sold on Earth.

The New Industrial Society

Federal spending constituted a major source of economic growth, nearly doubling in the 1950s to \$180 billion. Federal expenditures, just 1 percent of the GNP in 1929, reached 17 percent by the mid-1950s. These funds built roads and airports, financed home mortgages, supported farm prices, and provided stipends for education. More than half the federal budget—10 percent of the GNP—went to defense spending. The federal government remained the nation's chief sponsor of scientific and technological research and development (R&D).

Particularly for the West, it was as if World War II had never ended. Politicians from both parties labored to keep defense spending flowing westward. By the late 1950s, California alone received half the space budget and a quarter of all major military contracts. Denver had the largest number of federal employees outside Washington, DC. Government spending transformed the West of rugged individualists into a new West of bureaucrats, defense contractors, and scientists dependent on federal funds.

Government funding and control transformed both the U.S. military and the industrial economy. Financed by the Atomic Energy Commission and using navy scientists, the nation's first nuclear power plant came online in 1957. The chemical industry continued its wartime surge. As pesticides contaminated groundwater supplies and plastics reduced landfill space, Americans—unaware of the hidden perils—marveled at fruits and vegetables covered with Saran Wrap and delighted in their Dacron suits, Acrilan socks, and Teflon-coated pans.

Electricity consumption tripled in the 1950s, and electronics became the fifth-largest American industry, as consumers purchased electric washers and dryers, freezers, blenders, television sets, and stereos. Cheap oil fueled expansion. Domestic oil production and foreign imports rose steeply, and by 1960 oil had replaced coal as the nation's main energy source. Hardly anyone paid attention when a physicist warned in 1953 that “adding 6 billion tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere each year is warming up the Earth.”

Plentiful cheap gasoline fed the growth of the automobile and aircraft industries. Aerospace, the nation's third-largest industry in the 1950s, depended on defense spending and federally funded research. The automobile industry, still the nation's industrial titan, also applied technological R&D. Between 1945 and 1960, automation halved the number of hours and workers needed to produce a car.



Bettmann / CORBIS

Production Line at Douglas Aircraft Company

The Cold War stimulated an enormous economic boom in defense spending. By midcentury, more than half the federal budget, about 10 percent of the GNP, went to defense contractors like Douglas Aircraft, which helped the economies of the South and the West to flourish.

The Age of Computers

The computer was a key to technological revolution. In late 1946, the military devised ENIAC, the first electronic computer, to improve artillery accuracy. The unwieldy machine, with eighteen thousand vacuum tubes, could perform five thousand calculations per second. Next came the development of operating instructions, or programs, and the replacement of wires by printed circuits. Then, in 1948, Bell Labs invented tiny, solid-state transistors that ended reliance on radio tubes and initiated the age of computers.

Sales of electronic computers to industry rose from twenty in 1954 to more than two thousand in 1960. Major manufacturers used them to monitor production lines, track inventory, and ensure quality control. In government, computers

were as indispensable to Pentagon strategists playing war games as to the Census Bureau and the Internal Revenue Service. By the mid-1960s more than thirty thousand mainframe computers would be used by banks, hospitals, and universities.

The development of the high-technology complex known as Silicon Valley began in 1951. Stanford University utilized its science and engineering faculties to design products for the Fairchild Semiconductor and Hewlett-Packard companies. This relationship between universities and corporations became a model followed by other high-tech firms throughout the Santa Clara valley. Similar developments would follow along Massachusetts' Route 128; near Austin, Texas; and in North Carolina's Research Triangle.

The Costs of Bigness

Rapid technological advances accelerated the growth and power of big business. In 1950, twenty-two firms had assets of more than \$1 billion; by 1960, fifty did. By then, one-half of 1 percent of corporations earned more than half the total corporate income in the United States. Wealthy firms swallowed weak competitors and became oligopolies. Three television networks monopolized the nation's airwaves; three automobile and three aluminum companies produced 90 percent of America's cars and aluminum; and large corporations controlled the lion's share of assets and sales in steel, petroleum, chemicals, and electrical machinery. Corporations acquired overseas facilities to become "multinational" enterprises. Growth and consolidation meant greater bureaucratization. "Executives" replaced "capitalists." Success required conformity not creativity, teamwork not individuality. According to sociologist David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), the new "company people" were "other-directed," eager to follow the cues from their peers.

Changes in agriculture paralleled those in industry. Farming grew increasingly scientific and mechanized. Between 1945 and 1960, technology halved the work hours necessary to grow crops. Many farm families migrated to cities. Meanwhile, heavily capitalized farm businesses prospered by using more and more machines and chemicals.

Until the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962, few Americans understood the extent to which fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides poisoned the environment. Carson, a former researcher for the Fish and Wildlife Service, dramatized the problems caused by the use of the insecticide DDT and its spread through the food chain. Her depiction of a "silent spring" caused by the death of songbirds from DDT toxicity led many states to ban its use. The federal government followed suit.

Silent Spring Rachel Carson's 1962 book exposing the ecological damage wrought by pesticides

CHECKING IN

- Federal spending, especially in defense industries and military research and development, helped fuel a decade of economic growth.
- The computer industry began a growth spurt as government and business took advantage of the new technology.
- Consolidation and bigness characterized agriculture as well as industry; environmental damage was one result.
- Unions sagged because of prosperity, automation, and an increasingly white-collar work force.

Blue-Collar Blues

Consolidation also transformed the labor movement. In 1955, the AFL and CIO merged, bringing 85 percent of union members into a single unit. Although leaders promised aggressive unionism, organized labor fell victim to its success at the bargaining table. Higher wages, a shorter workweek, paid vacations, health-care coverage, and automatic wage hikes tied to the cost of living led most workers to view themselves as middle class rather than the proletariat.

A decrease in the number of blue-collar workers further sapped labor militancy. Most of the new jobs in the 1950s were in the service sector and in public employment, which banned collective bargaining by labor unions, and automation cut membership in the coal, auto, and steelworkers' unions by more than half. In 1956, for the first time in U.S. history, white-collar workers outnumbered blue-collar workers. Although most service jobs were as routinized as any factory job, few unions sought to woo white-collar workers. The percentage of the unionized labor force dropped from a high of 36 percent in 1953 to 31 percent in 1960, and kept falling.

PROSPERITY AND THE SUBURBS

How accurate is the image of 1950s suburban life as one of contentment, conservatism, and conformity?

As real income (adjusted for inflation) rose, Americans spent less of their income on necessities and more on powered lawn mowers and air conditioners. They heaped their shopping carts with frozen, dehydrated, and fortified foods. When they lacked cash, they borrowed. In 1950, Diners' Club issued the first credit card, and American Express followed in 1958. Installment buying, home mortgages, and auto loans tripled Americans' private indebtedness in the 1950s. In its effort to convince people to buy what they did not need, business spent more on advertising than the nation did on public schools. Thrift and savings were no longer depicted as virtues.

Suburban America

Urged to "Buy Now, Pay Later," Americans purchased 58 million new cars during the 1950s. Manufacturers enticed people to trade in and up by offering flashier models, two-tone color, tail fins, and more powerful engines, such as Pontiac's 1955 "Sensational Strato-Streak V-8," which could go more than twice as fast as any speed limit. The results were increases in highway deaths, air pollution, oil consumption, and "autosclerosis"—clogged urban arteries.

Government policy as well as "auto-mania" spurred white Americans' exodus to the suburbs. Federal spending on highways skyrocketed from \$79 million in 1946 to \$2.6 billion in 1960. Once-remote areas came within "commuting distance" for urban workers. The income-tax code stimulated home sales by allowing deductions for home-mortgage interest payments and for property taxes. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Administration (VA) offered low-interest loans, although both continued to deny loans to blacks who sought to buy homes in white neighborhoods. In 1960, suburbia was 98 percent white.

In 1947 in Long Island, some thirty miles from Manhattan, Alfred and William Levitt used mass-production techniques to construct thousands of look-alike 720-square-foot houses as quickly as possible. With "Levittown" as the ground-breaker, 85 percent of the 13 million new homes built in the 1950s were in the suburbs. In the greatest internal migration in its history, some 20 million Americans moved to the suburbs in the decade—making the suburban population nearly equal to that of the central cities. Although social critics lampooned the



Projected Interstate Highway System, 1957

Touted as the largest public works project in the history of the world, the Highway Act (1956) provided for the nation's first centrally planned transportation system and the construction of a national system of high-speed expressways. The expressways lured more residents and businesses to suburbia and boosted the interstate trucking business. But they also made Americans more dependent on cheap and plentiful gasoline, while hastening the decline of the nation's railroad lines and urban mass-transportation systems. The construction of highways—"white men's roads through black men's bedrooms," as the National Urban League described them—decimated many minority neighborhoods.

"ticky-tacky" houses in "disturbia," suburban life embodied the American Dream for many families who longed for their own home, good schools, and neighbors like themselves.

Americans also moved South and West, into the Sun Belt, lured by job opportunities, the climate, and the pace of life. California, where the population went from 9 to 19 million between 1945 and 1964, supplanted New York as the most populous state. Los Angeles boasted the highest per capita ownership of private homes and cars of any city. Initially designed to lure shoppers downtown, the highway system instead became the road to a home in the suburbs.

Industry, too, also headed South and West, drawn by low taxes, low energy costs, and anti-union right-to-work laws. Senior citizens headed to the easier climate. Both groups brought a conservative outlook. By 1980, the population of the **Sun Belt**, which stretched from the Old Confederacy across Texas to southern California, exceeded that of the North and East. The political power of the Republican Party rose accordingly.

Sun Belt States of the southwestern United States; increasingly populous and conservative in the 1950s

Consensus and Conservatism

Not everyone embraced the conformity of 1950s' consumer culture, however. Intellectuals found a wide audience for their attack on "organization men" bent on getting ahead by going along and on "status seekers" pursuing external rewards to compensate for inner insecurities. Others took aim at the consumerist middle class: "all items in a national supermarket—categorized, processed, labeled, priced, and readied for merchandising."

This criticism oversimplified reality. It ignored ethnic and class diversity, the acquisitiveness and conformity of earlier generations, and the currents of dissent swirling beneath the surface. But it rightly spotlighted the elevation of comfort over challenge, and of private pleasures over public affairs. It was, in the main, a time of political passivity and preoccupation with personal gain.

Togetherness and the Baby Boom

In 1954, *McCall's* magazine coined the term "togetherness" to celebrate the ideal couple: the man and woman who centered their lives on home and children. Americans in the 1950s tended to marry young, have babies quickly, and have more of them. The fertility rate (the number of births per one thousand women) peaked at 123 in 1957, when an American baby was born every seven seconds.

New antibiotics subdued diphtheria and whooping cough, and the Salk and Sabin vaccines eliminated polio. The plunge in childhood mortality helped to raise American life expectancy from 65.9 years in 1945 to 70.9 years in 1970. Coupled with the **baby boom**, this led to a 19 percent population spurt during the 1950s. By 1960, children under fourteen constituted one-third of the population.

The sheer size of the baby-boom generation (76 million Americans were born between 1946 and 1964) ensured its impact. In the 1950s school construction boomed, as did college enrollments in the 1960s. The 1970s through the 1990s would see peaks in home construction, as the boomers had families, and in retirement investments. In the 1950s the baby boom made child rearing a foremost concern and reinforced the idea that women's place was in the home.

No one did more to emphasize the link between full-time mothers and healthy children than **Dr. Benjamin Spock**; only the Bible outsold his *Baby and Child Care* (1946) in the 1950s. Spock urged mothers not to work outside the home, in order to create an atmosphere of warmth and intimacy for their children. Crying babies were to be comforted; breast-feeding came back into vogue.

baby boom Enormous population spurt from 1946 to 1964

Dr. Benjamin Spock Physician and author who urged mothers to devote themselves full time to the welfare of their children

Domesticity

Popular culture throughout the 1950s glorified marriage and parenthood, painting a woman's devotion to life in the home with her children as the most cherished goal. Television mostly pictured women as at-home mothers. Hollywood perpetuated the stereotype of career women as neurotic. As Debbie Reynolds declared in *The Tender Trap* (1955), "A woman isn't a woman until she's been married and had children."

Education reinforced these ideas. Alongside academic subjects, girls studied typing, etiquette, and cooking. Guidance counselors cautioned young women not to

miss out on marriage by pursuing higher education. More men than women went to college, and only one-third of college women completed their degrees.

Women both embraced and repudiated the domestic ideal as profound changes accelerated. By 1960, twice as many worked outside the home as in 1940. In 1960, one-third of the labor force was female, and one out of three married women worked outside the home. Most held so-called “pink collar” jobs in the service industry—secretary or clerk, waitress or hairdresser. Their median wage was less than half that for men.

Most women worked to augment family income, not to challenge stereotypes, and took low-paying, low-prestige jobs. Yet many working women developed a heightened sense of expectations and empowerment. Transmitted to their daughters, that experience would fuel a feminist resurgence in the late 1960s.

Billy Graham Protestant evangelical preacher and outspoken opponent of homosexuality, communism, and working wives

Religion and Education

“Today in the U.S.,” *Time* claimed in 1954, “the Christian faith is back in the center of things.” Evangelist **Billy Graham**, Roman Catholic Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, and Protestant minister Norman Vincent Peale all had syndicated newspaper columns, best-selling books, and radio and television programs. Each promoted a potent mixture of religious salvation and aggressive anticommunism. Hollywood religious extravaganzas, such as *Ben Hur* and *The Ten Commandments*, were the biggest box-office hits of the 1950s, while television promoted the slogan that “the family that prays together stays together.”

Congress added “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance and required “IN GOD WE TRUST” to be put on all U.S. currency. While church membership doubled to 114 million between 1945 and 1960, the intensity of faith diminished for many people, as mainstream churches downplayed sin and evil, and preached Americanism and fellowship.

Similarly, education swelled in the 1950s yet seemed less rigorous than in earlier decades. The baby boom inflated primary-school enrollment by 10 million. California opened a new school every week throughout the decade and still faced a classroom shortage. The proportion of college-age Americans in higher education climbed from 15 percent in 1940 to more than 40 percent by the 1960s. “Progressive” educators promoted sociability and self-expression—“well-roundedness”—over science, math, and history. Surveys of college students found them conservative, conformist, and careerist, a “silent generation” seeking primarily security and comfort.

Few university faculty challenged the reigning thought of the day. Historians downplayed class conflicts and highlighted the pragmatism of most Americans. Consensus—the widely shared agreement on most matters of importance—was frequently depicted as central to America’s history and greatness.

Postwar Culture

American culture reflected the spirit of a prosperous era as well as Cold War anxiety. Enjoying more leisure time and bigger paychecks, Americans spent one-seventh of the GNP on entertainment. Spectator sports boomed, new symphony halls opened, and book sales doubled.

New York replaced Paris as the capital of the art world. Like the abstract canvases of Jackson Pollock and the cool jazz trumpet of Miles Davis, the major novels of the 1950s displayed introspection and improvisation. John Cheever's *The Wapshot Chronicles* and John Updike's *Rabbit Run* (1960) presented characters vaguely dissatisfied with jobs and home, longing for a more vital and authentic existence but incapable of decisive action.

Southern, African-American, and Jewish-American writers turned out the decade's most vital fiction. William Faulkner continued his dense saga of a family in Yoknapatawpha County, Mississippi, while Eudora Welty evoked small-town Mississippi life in *The Ponder Heart* (1954). The black experience found memorable expression in James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953) and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1951). Philip Roth's *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959) dissected the very different world of upwardly mobile Jews.

Hollywood reflected the diminished concern with political issues, churning out westerns, musicals, and costume spectacles. Most films about contemporary life portrayed Americans as one happy, white, middle-class family. Minorities and the poor remained invisible, and women appeared largely as "dumb blondes" or cute helpmates. But as TV viewing soared, movie attendance dropped by 50 percent, and a fifth of the nation's theaters became bowling alleys or supermarkets.

The Television Culture

No cultural medium ever grew so huge so quickly as television. In 1946, one in every eighteen thousand households had a TV set; by 1960, 90 percent of all households owned at least one TV, and more Americans had televisions than had bathrooms.

Business capitalized on the phenomenon. The three main radio networks—ABC, CBS, and NBC—gobbled up virtually every TV station in the country. *TV Guide* soon outsold all other periodicals. First marketed in 1954, the "TV dinner" changed the nation's eating habits. When Walt Disney produced a show on Davy Crockett in 1955, stores could not keep up with the massive demand for "King of the Wild Frontier" coonskin caps. It seemed that TV could sell anything.

Initially, TV showcased talent and creativity. Opera performances appeared in prime time, as did sophisticated comedies, dramas, and documentaries like Edward R. Murrow's *See It Now*. Early situation comedies such as *The Life of Riley* featured ethnic working-class families. As the price of TV sets fell and the chill of McCarthyism spread, the networks' appetite for a mass audience transformed TV into a cautious celebration of conformity and consumerism. Controversy went off the air. Only a few situation comedies, like Jackie Gleason's *The Honeymooners*, set in Brooklyn, did not feature suburban, consumer-oriented, upper-middle-class families. Most portrayed perfectly coiffed moms who loved to vacuum in high heels, frisky yet ultimately obedient kids, and all-knowing dads. Even Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, stars of *I Love Lucy*—a show which no network initially wanted because an all-American redhead was married to a Cuban—had a baby and left New York for suburbia.

Decrying television's mediocrity, in 1961 the head of the Federal Communications Commission called it "a vast wasteland." A steady parade of soaps, unsophisticated comedies, and violent westerns led others to call TV "the idiot box."



Courtesy of Motorola Museum © 1955 Motorola, Inc./Picture Research Consultants & Archives

Motorola TV Family Ad

The television set itself, so grandly advertised and displayed, was a symbol of postwar affluence. Overall, TV powerfully reinforced the conservative, celebratory values of everyday American life in the 1950s.

Measuring television's impact is difficult. Different people read the "texts" of TV (or of movies or books) in their own way and so receive their own messages from the medium. In the main, television reflected American society and stimulated the desire to be included in that society. It spawned mass fads for Barbie dolls and hula hoops and spread the message of consumerism. It reinforced gender and racial stereotypes, rarely showing African-Americans and Latinos—except in servile roles or prison scenes—and extolling male violence in fighting evil; it portrayed women as zany madcaps or self-effacing moms.

Television also changed political life. Politicians could effectively appeal to the voters over the heads of party leaders, and appearance mattered more than content. For example, at least 20 million watched Senator Joseph McCarthy bully and slander witnesses. Richard Nixon reached 58 million and saved his political career with his appeal in the "Checkers" speech, answering charges that he had received gifts and money from California businessmen. In addition, Eisenhower's pioneering use of brief "spot advertisements," combined with Stevenson's avoidance of televised appearances, clinched Ike's smashing presidential victories. In 1960, John F. Kennedy's "telegenic" image would play a significant role in his successful campaign.

Overall, television helped produce a more national culture, diminishing provincialism and regional differences. Its overwhelming portrayal of a contented citizenry reinforced complacency and hid the reality of "the other America."

CHECKING IN

- The baby boom renewed emphasis on the family and "togetherness."
- Motherhood was exalted, although women continued to pursue work outside the home.
- Organized religion and evangelicalism flourished; Billy Graham became a major American figure.
- Americans spent more time and money than ever on entertainment.
- Television became the dominant medium, changing politics as well as enforcing conformity, consumerism, and stereotypes.

SEEDS OF DISQUIET

What actions by minorities and youth foretold the movements for social change to come in the 1960s?

Late in the 1950s, apprehension ruffled the calm surface of American life. Questions about the nation's values and goals, periodic recessions, rising unemployment, and the growing national debt made Khrushchev's boast that "your grandchildren will live under communism" ring in American ears. The growing alienation of American youth and a technological breakthrough by the Soviet Union further diminished national pride.

Sputnik

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet Union launched the first artificial satellite, *Sputnik* ("Little Traveler"). Weighing 184 pounds and measuring only twenty-two inches in diameter, it circled Earth at eighteen thousand miles per hour. When *Sputnik II*, carrying a dog, went into a more distant orbit on November 3, critics said that Eisenhower had allowed a "technological Pearl Harbor."

Although the Eisenhower administration publicly disparaged the Soviet achievement, behind the scenes they pushed to have the American Vanguard missile readied to launch a satellite. On December 6, with millions watching on TV, Vanguard rose six feet into the air and exploded. Newspapers ridiculed America's "Flopnik."

Eisenhower did not laugh, however. Instead, he more than doubled the funds for missile development to \$5.3 billion in 1959. He also established the Science Advisory Committee, whose recommendations led to the creation of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in July 1958. By decade's end, the United States had launched several space probes and successfully tested the Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

Spurred by *Sputnik*, Americans embarked on a crash program to improve American education. The National Defense Education Act (1958) for the first time provided direct federal funding to higher education, especially to improve the teaching of the sciences, mathematics, and foreign languages. Far more funds went to university research to ensure national security. By 1960, the U.S. government was funneling \$1.5 billion to universities, a hundred-fold increase over 1940, and nearly a third of scientists and engineers on university faculties worked full-time on government research, primarily defense projects. Some observers dubbed it the "military-industrial-educational complex."

Sputnik First man-made satellite to orbit Earth; launched by the Soviet Union

A Different Beat

Few adults considered the implications of affluence for the young, or the consequences of having a teenage generation stay in school instead of working. Few pondered how the young would respond to growing up in an age when traditional values like thrift and self-denial had declining relevance. Despite talk of family togetherness, busy fathers paid little attention to their children, and mothers sometimes spent more time chauffeuring their young than listening to them. Much of what adults

knew about teenagers they learned from the mass media, which focused on the sensational and the superficial.

Accounts of juvenile delinquency abounded, portraying high schools as war zones, city streets as jungles, and teenagers as zip-gun-armed hoodlums. In truth, teenage crime barely increased. However, male teenagers sporting black-leather motorcycle jackets, their hair slicked into “ducktails,” aroused adult alarm.

Just as dismaying to parents, young Americans embraced rock and roll. In 1952, Cleveland radio host Alan Freed, having observed white teenagers dancing to rhythm-and-blues records by black performers, started a new radio program, “Moondog’s

Rock and Roll Party,” to play “race music.” In 1954, Freed took the popular program to New York, creating a national craze for rock and roll.

White performers transformed black rhythm and blues, with its heavy beat and suggestive lyrics, into “Top Ten” rock and roll. In 1954, Bill Haley and the Comets dropped some of the sexual allusions from Joe Turner’s “Shake, Rattle, and Roll,” added country-and-western guitar riffs, and produced the first major white rock-and-roll hit. When Haley performed “Rock Around the Clock” in *The Blackboard Jungle*, a 1955 film about juvenile delinquency, many parents linked rock and roll with disobedience and crime. Red-hunters saw it as a communist plot to corrupt youth. Segregationists claimed it was a ploy “to mix the races.” Psychiatrists feared it was “a communicable disease.” Some churches condemned it as “the devil’s music.”

“If I could find a white man who had the Negro sound and the Negro feel,” said Sam Phillips, the owner of Sun Records in Memphis, “I could make a million dollars.” He made it by finding **Elvis Presley**. Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, Elvis melded the Pentecostal music of his boyhood with the powerful beat and sexual energy of rhythm and blues. In songs like “Hound Dog” and “All Shook Up” he seemed to proclaim teenage “separateness.” Presley’s smirking lips

Elvis Presley Mississippi-born rock-and-roll singer beloved among younger Americans in the 1950s



AP Photo/RCA Victor

“Elvis the Pelvis” in 1956

In 1956 Elvis Presley skyrocketed to rock-and-roll stardom. His rebellious sensuality, which caused girls to scream and faint and boys to imitate his gyrating hips, reflected a hunger for more immediate and vital experiences than was considered “proper” in the 1950s.

and bucking hips shocked white middle-class adults. However, the more adults condemned rock and roll, the more teenagers loved it. Record sales tripled between 1954 and 1960, and Dick Clark's *American Bandstand* became the decade's biggest TV hit.

Portents of Change

Teens cherished rock and roll for defying adult propriety. They elevated characters like James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) to cult status for rejecting society's mores.

They delighted in *Mad* magazine's ridiculing of the phony and pretentious in middle-class America. They customized their cars to reject Detroit's standards. All were signs of their distinctiveness from the adult world.

Nonconformist writers known as the **Beats** expressed a more fundamental revolt against middle-class society. In works like Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* (1956) and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957), the Beats scorned the conformity and materialism of "square" America. They romanticized society's outcasts and glorified uninhibited sexuality and spontaneity in the search for "It," the ultimate authentic experience.

The mass media scorned the Beats, as they did all dissenters. But some admiring college youth took up the Beat message. They read poetry and listened to jazz, and some students even protested capital punishment and demonstrated against the continuing investigations of the House Un-American Activities Committee. Others decried the nuclear-arms race. In 1958 and 1959, thousands participated in Youth Marches for Integrated Schools in Washington. Together with the Beats and rock music, this vocal minority of the "silent generation" heralded a youth movement that would explode in the 1960s.

Beats 1950s poets and writers who criticized American materialism

CHECKING IN

- The launch of Russia's *Sputnik* satellite spurred crash programs in space research and education to catch up with the Soviets.
- Vast sums of money were channeled into education; government-funded research threatened to dominate universities.
- Rock-and-roll stars like Elvis Presley took center stage in teen music, widening a growing rift between teenagers and their parents.
- Nonconformist writers called "Beats" began to question American culture and society.

THE OTHER AMERICA

In what sense were there two Americas?

"I am an invisible man," declared the African-American narrator of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*; "I am invisible . . . because people refuse to see me." Indeed, few white middle-class Americans of the 1950s perceived the extent of social injustice in the United States. "White flight" from cities to suburbs physically separated races and classes. Popular culture focused on affluent white Americans enjoying the "good life." But poverty and racial discrimination were rife and dire, and the struggles for social justice intensified.

Poverty and Urban Blight

Although the percentage of poor families declined from 1947 to 1960, in 1960 some 35 million Americans, one-fifth of the nation, lived below the poverty line. Some

8 million elderly had yearly incomes of less than a thousand dollars.

One-third of the poor lived in depressed rural areas, and 2 million migrant farm workers lived in the most abject poverty. Observing a Texas migratory-labor camp

in 1955, a journalist reported that 96 percent of the children had had no milk in the previous six months, eight out of ten adults had eaten no meat, and most slept “on the ground, in a cave, under a tree, or in a chicken house.”

The bulk of the poor huddled in decaying inner-city slums. Displaced southern blacks and Appalachian whites, Native Americans forced off reservations, and newly arrived Hispanics strained cities’ inadequate facilities. Nearly two hundred thousand Mexican-Americans herded into San Antonio’s Westside barrio; a local newspaper described them as living like cattle in a stockyard. As described by Michael Harrington in *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (1962), the poor lived trapped in a cycle of want and deprivation. Unable to afford a nutritious diet or doctors, the poor got sick more often and for longer than affluent Americans. Children of the poor started school at a disadvantage and rapidly fell behind; many dropped out. Living with neither hope nor skills, the poor bequeathed a similar legacy to their children.

The pressing need for low-cost housing went unanswered. Slum-clearance and urban-renewal projects shunted the poor from one ghetto to another to make room for parking garages and cultural centers. Bulldozers razed the Los Angeles barrio of Chavez Ravine to make way for Dodger Stadium. Landlords, realtors, and bankers deliberately excluded nonwhites from decent housing. Half of the housing in New York’s Harlem predated 1900. There, a dozen people might share a tiny apartment with broken windows, faulty plumbing, and gaping holes in the walls. Harlem’s rates of illegitimacy, infant deaths, narcotics use, and crime towered above city and national averages.

Latinos and Latinas

Hispanic-Americans initially made little headway in ending discrimination. High unemployment on the Caribbean island and the advent of direct air service to New York in 1945 brought a steady stream of Puerto Ricans to the city, where they could earn four times the average wage available on the island. By 1960, nearly a million lived in El Barrio in New York City’s East Harlem.

In New York Hispanic-Americans suffered from inadequate housing and schools, as well as police harassment; they were denied decent jobs and political recognition. Family frictions flared in the transition to unaccustomed ways. For example, parents felt upstaged by children who learned English and obtained jobs that were closed to them. The relationship between husbands and wives changed as women found readier access to jobs than did men.

Mexican-Americans suffered the same indignities. Most were underpaid and segregated from mainstream American life. After World War II, new irrigation systems added 7.5 million acres to the agricultural lands of the Southwest, stimulating demand for cheap Mexican labor. In 1951, to stem the resulting tide of illegal Mexican immigrants, Congress reintroduced the wartime “temporary worker” program that brought in seasonal farm laborers called *braceros*. Many stayed without authorization, joining a growing number of Latinos who entered the country illegally.

During the 1953–1955 recession, the Eisenhower administration’s “Operation Wetback” (a term of derision for illegal Mexican immigrants) deported some 3 million allegedly undocumented entrants. Periodic roundups, however, did not stop the millions of Mexicans who continued to cross the poorly guarded border. The *bracero* program itself peaked in 1959, admitting 450,000 workers.

The swelling Mexican-American population became more urban. In Los Angeles County it doubled to more than six hundred thousand, and the *colonias* (ko-lo-NEE-as) of Denver, El Paso, Phoenix, and San Antonio grew proportionately as large. By 1970, 85 percent of Mexican-Americans lived in urban areas. As service in World War II gave Hispanics an increased sense of their own American identity and a claim on their rights as American citizens, urbanization gave them better educational and employment opportunities. Unions like the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA) sought higher wages and better working conditions for their Mexican-American members, and such middle-class organizations as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) campaigned to desegregate schools and public facilities.

In 1954, the Supreme Court banned the exclusion of Mexican-Americans from Texas jury lists, and in 1958 El Paso elected the first Mexican-American mayor. Latinos also took pride in baseball star Roberto Clemente and their growing numbers in the major leagues, in Nobel Prize winners like biologist Severo Ochoa, and in such Hollywood stars as Anthony Quinn. But the existence of millions of undocumented aliens and the continuation of the *bracero* program stigmatized all people of Spanish descent and depressed their wages. The median income of Hispanics was less than two-thirds that of Anglos. At least a third lived in poverty.

Native Americans

Native Americans remained the poorest, most ignored minority. Their death rate was three times the national average, and unemployment on reservations ran a staggering 70 to 86 percent for some tribes. Congress again changed course, moving away from efforts to reassert Indian sovereignty and cultural autonomy and back toward the goal of assimilation. Between 1954 and 1962, Congress terminated treaties and withdrew financial support from sixty-one reservations. First applied to the Menominees (meh-NAH-mih-nees) of Wisconsin and the Klamaths (CLAY-muths) of Oregon, who owned valuable timberlands, the policy was disastrous. Further impoverishing the tribes, it transferred more than five hundred thousand acres of Native American lands to non-Indians.

By 1960, about sixty thousand Indians had been relocated to cities. Some became middle class, some ended up in run-down urban shantytowns, and nearly a third eventually returned to their reservations. The National Congress of American Indians vigorously opposed termination, and most tribal politicians advocated Indian sovereignty, treaty rights, and federal trusteeship.

CHECKING IN

- Michael Harrington's *The Other America* called attention to the poverty and deprivation that existed beneath the complacent surface of the 1950s.
- Many of the poor remained trapped in decaying cities.
- Poverty and discrimination, often sharpened by illegal immigrant status, continued to dog Mexican-Americans; as their population became more urban, Spanish-speakers began to assert their rights.
- Native Americans' welfare slipped even further as government policy veered toward assimilation and termination of treaties.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

What innovative strategies were developed by the civil rights movement in this era?

The integration of baseball in 1947, spearheaded by the brilliant Jackie Robinson, symbolized a new robustness in the fight against racial discrimination and segregation in the postwar era. The war had heightened African-American

expectations for racial equality, and demands included a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC), the outlawing of lynching, and the right to vote.

The Politics of Race

Fearful of black assertiveness in seeking the vote and in mobilizing grass-roots forces, white racists accelerated their repression and violence. In 1946, whites killed several black veterans in Georgia for daring to vote and blinded a black soldier for failing to sit in the rear of a bus in South Carolina. In Columbia, Tennessee, also in 1946, a white riot against blacks who were insisting on their rights led to the arrest of seventy African-Americans and the jailhouse lynching of two of the prisoners.

These events horrified President Truman. Genuinely believing that every American should enjoy the full rights of citizenship, Truman in late 1946 established the **President's Committee on Civil Rights** to investigate race relations. The committee's report, *To Secure These Rights*, published in 1947, called for the eradication of racial discrimination and segregation and proposed anti-lynching and anti-poll tax legislation. Boldly, Truman in February 1948 sent a special message to Congress urging lawmakers to enact most of the committee's proposals. Truman's subsequent actions would fall short of his rhetoric. However, the president issued executive orders barring discrimination in federal employment and creating a committee to ensure "equality of treatment and opportunity" in the armed services.

President's Committee on Civil Rights Empanelled by Truman; recommended a legal assault on segregation

Jim Crow in Court

During the Truman presidency, moreover, the Supreme Court declared segregation in interstate bus transportation unconstitutional (*Morgan v. Virginia*, 1946) and outlawed restrictive housing covenants that forbade the sale or rental of property to minorities (*Shelley v. Kraemer*, 1948). Soon thereafter, the NAACP's chief attorney, Thurgood Marshall, undertook a direct attack on segregation itself. He pursued a strategy built on an earlier federal court ruling that had prohibited the segregation of Mexican-American children in California schools.

In May 1954, the new Chief Justice appointed by Eisenhower, **Earl Warren** (1953), speaking for a unanimous Court, reversed the "separate but equal" doctrine of *Plessy v. Ferguson* (see Chapter 20) in the landmark case of ***Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka***. Overturning more than sixty years of legal segregation, the Supreme Court ruled that separate educational facilities for blacks and whites were "inherently unequal," denying black children the "equal protection of the laws" guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. A year later, the Court decreed that school desegregation should proceed "with all deliberate speed."

In the border states, some African-American and white students sat side-by-side for the first time in history. But in the South, where segregation was deeply entrenched in law and custom, politicians vowed resistance. Although not personally racist, Ike never publicly endorsed the *Brown* decision and privately called his appointment of Earl Warren "the biggest damn fool mistake I ever made."

Encouraged by the president's indecisiveness, White Citizens' Councils organized to defend segregation and the Ku Klux Klan revived. Declaring *Brown* "null, void, and of no effect," southern legislatures adopted a strategy of

Earl Warren Chief justice of the Supreme Court who broadened constitutional protections for individual rights

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka 1954 Supreme Court decision that declared "separate but equal" doctrine unconstitutional; paved the way for the end of segregation

“massive resistance.” They closed down or denied state aid to school systems that desegregated and enacted pupil-placement laws that permitted school boards to assign black and white children to different schools. In 1956, more than a hundred members of Congress signed the **Southern Manifesto**, denouncing *Brown*. That year, not a single African-American attended school with whites in the Deep South, and few did so in the Upper South.

Southern Manifesto

1956 statement of southern congressmen opposing the *Brown* decision and defending racial segregation

The Laws of the Land

Southern resistance reached a climax in September 1957.

Although the Little Rock school board had accepted a federal court order to desegregate Central High School, Arkansas governor Orval E. Faubus mobilized the state’s National Guard to block enforcement and bar nine African-American students from entering the school. After another court order forced Faubus to withdraw the guardsmen, an angry mob of whites blocked the black students’ entry.



The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc.

Little Rock, 1957

Elizabeth Eckford, age fifteen, one of the nine black students to desegregate Central High School, endures abuse on her way to school, September 4, 1957. Forty years later, the young white woman shouting insults asked for forgiveness.

Eisenhower, believing he had to uphold federal authority, nationalized the Arkansas National Guard, augmented by a thousand federal troops, to protect the African-American students for the rest of the academic year. He thus became, albeit reluctantly, the first president since Reconstruction to use federal troops to enforce the rights of blacks. Local authorities, however, shut down Little Rock's public schools the next year, and by decade's end, fewer than 1 percent of African-American students in the Deep South attended desegregated schools.

Clearly, court victories alone would not end Jim Crow laws. Nor would weak legislation. The Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first since Reconstruction, established a permanent commission on civil rights with broad investigatory powers, but did little to guarantee the ballot to blacks; likewise, the Civil Rights Act of 1960 only slightly strengthened the first measure's enforcement provisions. At best, these bills implied a changing view of race relations by the federal government, which further encouraged blacks to fight for their rights.

Mass Protest in Montgomery

To sweep away the separate but rarely equal Jim Crow facilities in the South, African-Americans turned to new tactics, organizations, and leaders. They utilized nonviolent direct-action protest to engage large numbers of blacks in their own freedom struggle and to arouse white America's conscience.

In the 1950s, racism still touched even the smallest details of daily life. In Montgomery, Alabama, black bus riders had to surrender their seats so that no white rider would stand. Although they were more than three-quarters of all passengers, African-Americans had to pay their fares at the front of the bus, leave, and reenter through the back door; sit only in the rear; and then give up their seats to any standing white passengers.

Rosa Parks Civil-rights leader whose refusal to give a white man her bus seat triggered the Montgomery bus boycott

On December 1, 1955, **Rosa Parks**, for many years an officer of the Montgomery NAACP and a veteran of civil-rights protests in the 1930s and 1940s, refused to get up so that a white man could sit. "I was not tired physically," she later wrote. "No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in." Her arrest sparked a boycott of the buses—the beginning of the mass phase of the civil rights movement. Boycotters founded the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) to organize the protest, and elected **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, a twenty-seven-year-old African-American minister, to lead the boycott. Montgomery African-Americans trudged the streets, organized carpools, and raised thousands of dollars to carry on the fight. They persisted for more than a year until the Supreme Court ordered the buses desegregated.

Martin Luther King, Jr. African-American minister whose emphasis on nonviolence catapulted him to leadership of the civil rights movement

The Montgomery bus boycott demonstrated African-American strength and determination. It vaulted Dr. King, whose oratory simultaneously inspired black activism and touched white consciences, into the national spotlight. As no one before, King presented the case for black rights in a vocabulary that echoed both the Bible and the freedom values of the Founding Fathers.

King's philosophy of civil disobedience fused the spirit of Christianity with the strategy of achieving racial justice by nonviolent resistance. His insistence on nonviolence also diminished the likelihood of bloodshed. Preaching that blacks must lay their bodies on the line to provoke crises that would force whites to confront their racism, King urged his followers to love their enemies. By so doing, he believed, blacks

would convert their oppressors and bring “redemption and reconciliation.” In 1957, King and a group of black ministers formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Yet more than on leaders, the movement’s triumphs in the decade ahead would depend on the thousands of ordinary people who marched, rallied, and demonstrated extraordinarily in grass-roots protest movements.

New Tactics for a New Decade

Foreshadowing the massive grass-roots activism to come, four black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, entered the local Woolworth’s on February 1, 1960, and sat down at the whites-only lunch counter, defying segregation. “We don’t serve colored here,” the waitress replied when the freshmen ordered coffee and doughnuts. The blacks remained seated. They would not be moved.

Impatient yet hopeful, the students would not accept the inequality their parents had endured. Inspired by the earlier black struggles for justice, they vowed to sit-in until they were served. Six months later, after prolonged sit-ins, boycotts, and demonstrations by hundreds of students, and violent white resistance, Greensboro’s civic leaders grudgingly allowed blacks to sit down at hitherto segregated restaurants and be served.

Meanwhile, the courageous example of the Greensboro “coffee party” catalyzed similar sit-ins throughout the border states and Upper South. Black students confronted humiliations and violence: They endured beatings, cigarette-burnings, tear-gassing, and jailing. Yet they stayed true to nonviolent principles and refused to retaliate.

The determination of the students transformed the struggle for racial equality. Their activism and commitment emboldened black adults and other youths to act. “I myself desegregated a lunch counter, not somebody else, not some big man, some powerful man, but little me,” claimed a student. By year’s end, nearly fifty thousand people had participated in demonstrations, desegregating lunch counters and other public facilities in 126 southern cities.

Newly encouraged and emboldened, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which had been founded in WWII, organized a “Freedom Ride” through the Deep South in spring 1961 to dramatize the flouting of federal court decisions banning segregation in interstate transportation facilities. It aroused white wrath. Mobs beat the Freedom Riders in Anniston, Alabama, burning their bus, and mauled the protestors in Birmingham. A week later, scores of racist southerners in Montgomery beat Freedom Riders with bats and iron chains, generating international publicity and indignation, which ultimately forced the Interstate Commerce Commission to require the desegregation of all interstate carriers and terminals.

Many of the Freedom Riders were members of the **Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)**. Formed in April 1960 by participants in the sit-ins, SNCC (known as “Snick”) stressed both the nonviolent civil disobedience strategy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the need to stimulate local activism and leadership. In fall 1961, it chose Albany (all-BENNY), Georgia, as the site of a campaign to desegregate public facilities and secure the vote. Wily local authorities avoided the overt violence that had

Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

Youth auxiliary of the NAACP; involved in sit-ins and rallies

CHECKING IN

- Truman established the President’s Committee on Civil Rights; its report, *To Secure These Rights*, pointed the way toward racial equality.
- The *Brown* decision declared the practice of racial segregation in the schools to be unconstitutional.
- White opposition in Little Rock, Arkansas, and throughout the South slowed the process of school integration to a crawl.
- A successful boycott of segregated buses in Montgomery, Alabama, vaulted Martin Luther King, Jr., to the forefront of the civil rights movement.
- CORE, SNCC, and other groups used nonviolent civil disobedience to expose the inherent violence of segregation.

won the Freedom Riders national sympathy. The Albany movement collapsed, but the lesson of Albany, and of the Freedom Rides, had been learned: Only the provocation of vicious white racist violence generated national publicity and forced the federal government to intervene. The young activists who learned that lesson and how to use the media skillfully would chart the course of the 1960s.

Chapter Summary

What were the main sources of the postwar economic expansion and affluence? (page 661)

Although the shift to peacetime production after V-J Day did not always progress smoothly, in general, the postwar era was one of unparalleled affluence for most Americans. Building on the accumulated savings and pent-up demand for consumer goods after World War II, high levels of government spending, the GI Bill, and new technologies that increased productivity spurred an economic boom.

What, if any, were the negative consequences associated with economic growth and prosperity? (page 663)

A decade of sustained prosperity grew in part from massive federal spending, much of it linked to defense. The computer industry began to develop. A new corporate culture emerged, emphasizing conformity over initiative. Meanwhile, the use of chemicals in an increasingly automated agricultural industry caused environmental damage. In addition, union membership sagged, owing to prosperity, automation, and the increasing proportion of Americans working in white-collar positions.

How accurate is the image of 1950s suburban life as one of contentment, conservatism, and conformity? (page 667)

The suburbs boomed, as did the Sun Belt. The baby boom put renewed emphasis on the family and led to the exaltation of motherhood as a woman's principal role; "togetherness" blossomed. Organized religion flourished, as did evangelicalism. Television became the dominant medium, emphasizing conformity and consumerism while changing politics and reinforcing stereotypes.

KEY TERMS

GI Bill (p. 662)
 Bretton Woods agreement (p. 663)
Silent Spring (p. 666)
 Sun Belt (p. 668)
 baby boom (p. 669)
 Dr. Benjamin Spock (p. 669)
 Billy Graham (p. 670)
Sputnik (p. 673)
 Elvis Presley (p. 674)
 Beats (p. 675)
 President's Committee on Civil Rights (p. 678)
 Earl Warren (p. 678)
Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (p. 678)
 Southern Manifesto (p. 679)
 Rosa Parks (p. 680)
 Martin Luther King, Jr. (p. 680)
 Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) (p. 681)

What actions by minorities and youth foretold the movements for social change to come in the 1960s? (page 673)

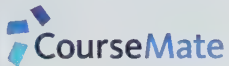
The Soviet Union's successful launch of the *Sputnik* satellite shattered American complacency. In response, the government funneled vast sums into education and university research. A new kind of music, rock and roll, emerged to identify a teenage subculture; "Elvis the Pelvis" became the symbol of teen rebellion and parental despair. In their nonconformist writings, the Beats openly questioned American materialism and joined rock and roll in laying the foundation for the youth rebellion of the 1960s.

In what sense were there two Americas? (page 675)

Suburban prosperity left the poor isolated on a remote island of deprivation and powerlessness in "the other America." Poor Americans, rural and urban, lived in a cycle of want and deprivation. Hispanic Americans began to assert their rights, while Native Americans slipped further behind.

What innovative strategies were developed by the civil rights movement in this era? (page 677)

In the courts, the NAACP ceased requesting that separate facilities be equal and instead insisted that true equality required desegregation; this change in strategy resulted in the landmark *Brown* school desegregation decision. And in the streets, Martin Luther King, Jr., SNCC, and CORE employed the techniques of nonviolent civil disobedience to attack Jim Crow laws, bringing some gains and stimulating an insurgency that spurred further challenges to make the nation live up to its ideals.



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

Liberalism, Civil Rights, and War in Vietnam

CHAPTER 28

1960–1975

CHAPTER PREVIEW

The Kennedy Presidency, 1960–1963

To what extent did the Kennedy administration's domestic record reflect its liberal rhetoric?

The Continuing Struggle for Black Equality, 1961–1968

What were the major successes and failures of the civil-rights movement from 1961 to 1968?

The Expanding Movement for Equality

How and why did the protest movements of minorities shift from the goals and tactics associated with Martin Luther King, Jr., to those of Black Power?

Liberalism Ascendant, 1963–1968

How did Lyndon Johnson's Great Society program exemplify the new liberalism of the 1960s?

The Vietnam Crusade, 1961–1975

How and why did Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon each deepen America's involvement in the war in Indochina?



Martin Luther King, Jr.

Facing the nearly quarter of a million Americans who had come to Washington, DC, on August 28, 1963, to petition for civil rights, Martin Luther King, Jr., issued an urgent call for change. A century had passed since the Emancipation Proclamation, and yet, “the Negro is still not free.” Blacks, King insisted, would brook no further delay:

We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: “For Whites Only.” We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and the Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like the waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

King's speech represented the high-water mark of the black freedom struggle. Along with inspiring the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which together sounded the death knell for Jim Crow laws, King would help redefine liberalism to embrace civil rights. Two years earlier, President John Kennedy launched the era with a promise to "pay any price, bear any burden" to win the Cold War and fulfill America's destiny as the last best hope of mankind. JFK's rhetoric, like King's, generated fervent hopes and lofty expectations.

But JFK's assassination, at a time of peace and prosperity, would begin a long descent toward national disillusionment. His successor, Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ), brought forth the Great Society—the apex of liberalism. The Great Society promised health care for the aged and indigent, federal aid to education, urban development, environmental safeguards, immigration reform, and an end to racial discrimination and poverty. Nevertheless, the liberal hope to enhance liberty and equality crashed against defeat in Vietnam. The racial strife of the "long hot summers" splintered the civil-rights movement and provoked a growing conservative reaction.

JFK, LBJ, and Richard Nixon all saw the need to thwart the spread of communism in Southeast Asia. The war there would cost America dearly in lives and dollars. It damaged the economy, fomented internal dissent, eroded public faith in elected officials, and transformed the brief era of triumphant liberalism into a time of discord and despair.

THE KENNEDY PRESIDENCY, 1960–1963

To what extent did the Kennedy administration's domestic record reflect its liberal rhetoric?

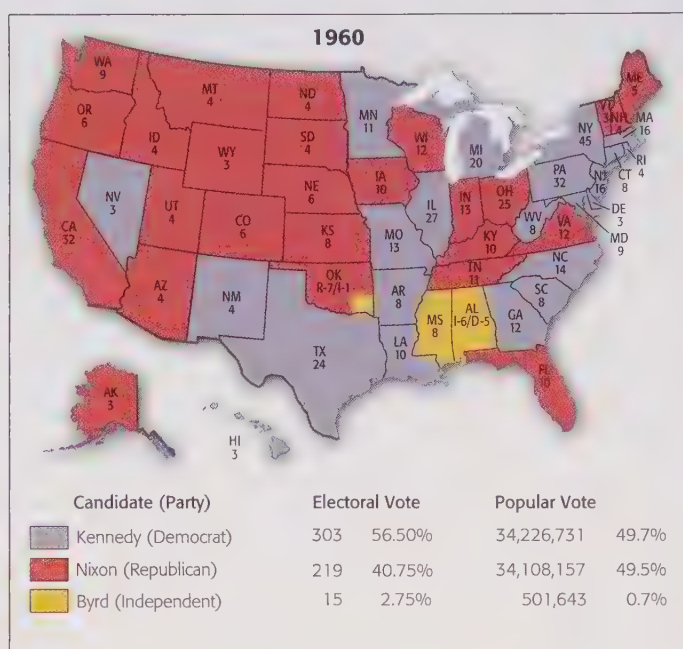
Projecting an image of youth and vigor, **John F. Kennedy** personified the self-confident liberal who believed that an activist state could improve life at home and confront the communist challenge abroad. His wealthy father, Joseph P. Kennedy, seethed with ambition and instilled in his sons a passion to excel and to attain political power. Despite a severe back injury, John Kennedy served in the navy in World War II and became a war hero. He then used his charm and his father's connections to win election in 1946 to the House of Representatives from a Boston district where he had never lived. Although Kennedy earned little distinction in Congress, Massachusetts voters sent him to the Senate in 1952 and overwhelmingly reelected him in 1958.


By then he had a beautiful wife, Jacqueline, and a Pulitzer Prize for *Profiles in Courage* (1956), written largely by a staff member. Despite the political liability of his Roman Catholic faith, he won a first-ballot victory at the 1960 Democratic convention. Just forty-three years old, he sounded the theme of a "New Frontier," exhorting Americans to "get this country moving again."

John F. Kennedy Thirty-fifth president of the United States; Cold Warrior who projected youthful dynamism

A New Beginning

"All at once you had something exciting," recalled a University of Nebraska student. "You had a guy who had little kids and who liked to play football on his front lawn."

**Map 28.1 The Election of 1960**

 **Interactive Map**

Kennedy was talking about pumping new life into the nation and steering it in new directions.” But most voters wanted the stability, security, and continuation of Eisenhower’s “middle way” promised by the Republican candidate, Vice President Richard M. Nixon. Although scorned by liberals for his McCarthyism, Nixon was better known and more experienced than Kennedy, identified with the still-popular Ike, and a Protestant.

However, Nixon fumbled his opportunity, agreeing to meet Kennedy in a series of televised debates. More than 70 million tuned in to the first televised debate between presidential candidates—a broadcast that secured the dominance of television in American politics. Nixon, sweating visibly, appeared haggard and insecure; in striking contrast, the tanned, telegenic Kennedy radiated confidence. Radio listeners judged the debate a draw, but the far more numerous television viewers declared Kennedy the victor. He shot up in the polls, and Nixon never recovered.

Kennedy also benefited from an economic recession in 1960, and from his choice of a southern Protestant, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson, as his running mate. Still, the election was the closest since 1884. Only 120,000 votes separated the two candidates. Kennedy’s religion cost him millions of popular votes, but the Catholic vote in the closely contested midwestern and northeastern states delivered crucial Electoral College votes, enabling him to squeak to victory (see Map 28.1).

Kennedy’s inauguration set the tone of a new era: “The torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans.” In sharp contrast to the Eisenhower administration’s reliance on businessmen, Kennedy surrounded himself with liberal intellectuals.

Kennedy seemed more a celebrity than a politician. Aided by his wife, he adorned his presidency with the trappings of culture and excellence, inviting distinguished artists to perform at the White House and studding his speeches with quotations from Emerson. Awed by his grace and wit, the media extolled him as a vibrant leader and adoring husband. The public knew nothing of his fragile health, frequent use of mood-altering drugs to relieve pain, and extramarital affairs.

Kennedy’s Domestic Record

Media images obscured Kennedy’s lackluster domestic record. The conservative coalition of Republicans and southern Democrats that had stifled Truman’s Fair Deal doomed the New Frontier. Lacking the votes, Kennedy rarely pressed Congress for social legislation.

JFK made stimulating economic growth his domestic priority. To that end, he combined higher defense expenditures with investment incentives for



Chronology

1960	Sit-ins to protest segregation begin; John F. Kennedy elected president
1961	Peace Corps and Alliance for Progress created; Bay of Pigs invasion; Freedom Rides; Berlin Wall erected
1962	Cuban missile crisis
1963	Civil-rights demonstrations in Birmingham; March on Washington; Test-Ban Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States; Kennedy assassinated; Lyndon B. Johnson becomes president
1964	Freedom Summer in Mississippi; Civil Rights Act; Gulf of Tonkin incident and resolution; Economic Opportunity Act initiates “war on poverty”; Johnson elected president; Bombing of North Vietnam and Americanization of the war begin
1965	Assassination of Malcolm X; civil-rights march from Selma to Montgomery; César Chávez’s United Farm Workers strike in California; teach-ins to question U.S. involvement in Vietnam begin; Voting Rights Act; Watts riot in Los Angeles
1966	Black Panthers formed
1967	Massive antiwar demonstrations; race riots in Newark, Detroit, and other cities
1968	Vietnam peace talks open in Paris; Richard Nixon elected president
1970	United States invades Cambodia
1971	United States and South Vietnam invade Laos
1973	Vietnamese cease-fire agreement signed
1974	Indian Self-Determination Act
1975	South Vietnam surrenders following North Vietnam’s capture of Saigon

private enterprise. In 1961, he persuaded Congress to boost the defense budget by 20 percent. He vastly increased America’s nuclear stockpile and strengthened the military’s conventional forces. Kennedy also convinced Congress to finance a “race to the moon,” which Americans would win in 1969 at a cost of more than \$25 billion. Most importantly, Kennedy took his liberal advisers’ Keynesian advice to call for a huge cut in corporate taxes that would greatly increase the deficit but would presumably provide capital for businesses to invest, stimulating the economy and thus increasing tax revenues.

When the Kennedy presidency ended tragically in November 1963, the proposed tax cut was bottled up in Congress. But JFK’s economic program had already doubled the rate of economic growth and decreased unemployment, triggering the United States’ longest uninterrupted economic expansion.

The boom would both cause further ecological damage and provide the affluence that enabled Americans to care about the environment. The fallout scare of the 1950s raised questions about the planet’s well-being. The publication in 1962 of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (see Chapter 27) intensified concern. Additionally, with postwar prosperity, many Americans were concerned less with increased production and more with the quality of life. In 1963, Congress passed a Clean Air Act, regulating automotive and industrial emissions. After decades of heedless pollution, Washington hesitantly began to address environmental problems.

Cold War Activism

Proclaiming in his inaugural address that “we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship,” to assure the “success of liberty,” Kennedy launched a major military buildup and surrounded himself with Cold Warriors who shared his belief that American security depended on superior force and the willingness to use it. He also increased economic assistance to Third World countries to counter the appeal of communism. The Peace Corps, created in 1961, exemplified the New Frontier’s liberal anticommunism. By 1963, five thousand Peace Corps volunteers were serving two-year stints as teachers, sanitation engineers, crop specialists, and health workers in more than forty Third World nations.

In early 1961, a crisis flared in Laos, a tiny nation in Southeast Asia, where a civil war between American-supported forces and Pathet Lao rebels seemed headed toward a communist triumph. In July 1962, Kennedy agreed to a face-saving compromise that restored a neutralist government but left communist forces dominant in the countryside.

Spring 1961 brought Kennedy’s first major foreign-policy crisis. Despite his military advisers thinking it had little chance of success, he approved a CIA plan, drawn up in the Eisenhower administration, to invade Cuba. In April, fifteen hundred anti-Castro exiles landed at Cuba’s Bay of Pigs, assuming that their arrival would trigger a general uprising to overthrow Fidel Castro. It was a fiasco. Deprived of air cover because Kennedy wanted to conceal U.S. involvement, the invaders had no chance against Castro’s superior forces.

In July 1961, on the heels of the Bay of Pigs failure, Kennedy met with Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, who threatened war unless the West retreated from Berlin. A shaken Kennedy declared the defense of West Berlin essential to the Free World. He doubled draft calls, mobilized reservists, and called for vastly increased defense spending. The threat of nuclear war escalated until mid-August, when Moscow constructed a wall to seal off Soviet-held East Berlin and end the exodus of brains and talent to the West. The Berlin Wall became a concrete symbol of communism’s denial of personal freedom until it fell in 1989.

To the Brink of Nuclear War

In mid-October 1962, aerial photographs revealed that the Soviet Union had built bases for intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Cuba, which were capable of striking most U.S. soil. Smarting from the Bay of Pigs disaster and believing his credibility to be at stake, Kennedy responded forcefully. In a somber televised address he announced that the United States would “quarantine” Cuba—impose a naval blockade—to prevent delivery of more missiles and would dismantle by force the missiles already in Cuba if the Soviet Union did not do so.

The world held its breath. The two superpowers appeared to be on a collision course toward nuclear war. Soviet technicians worked feverishly to complete the missile launch pads, and Soviet missile-carrying ships steamed toward the blockade; B-52s armed with nuclear weapons took to the air; and nearly 250,000 troops assembled in Florida to invade Cuba. Secretary of State Dean Rusk reported, “We’re eyeball to eyeball.”

On October 25, a relieved Rusk announced, “I think the other fellow just blinked.” Kennedy received a message from Khrushchev promising to remove the

missiles if the United States pledged never to invade Cuba. As Kennedy prepared to respond positively, a second, more belligerent message arrived from the Soviet leader insisting that American missiles be withdrawn from Turkey as part of the deal. Hours later, an American U-2 reconnaissance plane was shot down over Cuba. Robert Kennedy persuaded his brother to accept the first message and simply ignore the second one. In the early morning hours of October 28, Khrushchev pledged to remove the missiles in return for Kennedy's noninvasion promise. Less publicly, Kennedy later removed U.S. missiles from Turkey.

Only after the end of the Cold War did the Russians disclose that Soviet forces in Cuba had possessed thirty-six nuclear warheads as well as nine tactical nuclear weapons for battlefield use, and that Soviet field commanders had independent authority to use these weapons. Worst of all, Kennedy did not know that the Soviets already had the ability to launch a nuclear strike from Cuba.

Chastened by coming so close to the brink of nuclear war, Kennedy and Khrushchev installed a telephone "hot line" so that the two sides could communicate instantly in future crises and then agreed to a treaty outlawing atmospheric and undersea nuclear testing. These efforts signaled a new phase of the Cold War, later called *détente* (day-TAHNT), in which the superpowers moved from confrontation to negotiation. Concurrently, the **Cuban missile crisis** escalated the arms race by convincing both sides of the need for nuclear superiority.

Cuban missile crisis

Brinkmanship between the United States and Soviet Union over nuclear missiles in Cuba in 1962 that nearly led to nuclear war

The Thousand-Day Presidency

On November 22, 1963, during a trip to Texas to shore up his reelection chances, a smiling JFK rode in an open car along Dallas streets lined with cheering crowds. Shots rang out. The president slumped, dying, his skull and throat shattered. Soon after, aboard Air Force One, Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as president.

Grief and disbelief numbed the nation as most Americans spent the next four days in front of their television sets staring at replays of the murder of accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald; at the somber state funeral, with the small boy saluting his father's casket; and at the grieving family lighting an eternal flame at Arlington National Cemetery. Few who watched would forget. Kennedy had helped make TV central to politics; now, in death, it made him the fallen hero-king of Camelot.

More admired in death than in life, JFK ranked as one of the very few "great" presidents in the view of a public that associated him with a spirit of energy and innovation. While Kennedy loyalists continue to stress his intelligence and his ability to change and grow, his detractors point to his lack of achievements, the discrepancy between his public image and his private philandering, his aggressive Cold War tactics, and his vast expansion of presidential powers. Partly because his own personal behavior made him beholden to FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, JFK allowed the agency to infringe on civil liberties.

Internationally, Kennedy left a mixed record. He signed the world's first nuclear-test-ban treaty yet undertook a massive arms buildup. He compromised on Laos but deepened U.S. involvement in Vietnam. He came to question the need for U.S.-Soviet confrontation yet insisted on U.S. global superiority and aggressively prosecuted the Cold War.

CHECKING IN

- Kennedy became the first TV president.
- JFK had relatively few successes in domestic legislation, but he promoted tax cuts that stimulated economic growth.
- The Peace Corps symbolized the optimism and idealism of youth who were confident in the New Frontier.
- Kennedy took a hard line in the Cold War and launched a major military buildup; the Cuban missile crisis took the two superpowers to the brink of war.
- After Kennedy's assassination, the Camelot myth stimulated liberal hopes.

Still, JFK inspired Americans to expect greatness, aroused the poor and the powerless, and stimulated the young to activism. Dying during the calm before the storm, he left his successor soaring expectations at home and a deteriorating entanglement in Vietnam.

THE CONTINUING STRUGGLE FOR BLACK EQUALITY, 1961–1968

What were the major successes and failures of the civil-rights movement from 1961 to 1968?

Following the lunch-counter sit-ins, civil-rights activists tried to convince Kennedy to act on their behalf. He would not do so, however, fearing it would split the Democratic Party and jeopardize his reelection. Yet the movement persisted until it had achieved *de jure*, or legal, equality; made protest respectable; and become an inspiration and model of activism for aggrieved others.

The African-American Revolution

As television coverage brought mounting numbers of African-Americans into the struggle for racial equality, civil-rights leaders pressured Kennedy to intervene. Dismantling segregation piecemeal would take generations, they realized; only comprehensive national legislation, backed by the power of the federal government, could guarantee full citizenship for African-Americans. To get this they needed a crisis that would outrage the conscience of the white majority and force the president's hand.

Determined to expose the violent extremism of southern racism, Martin Luther King, Jr., launched nonviolent marches, sit-ins, and prayers in Birmingham, Alabama, the most rigidly segregated big city in America. Birmingham's officials had even removed a book from the library that featured white and black rabbits. As such, few doubted Police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor's pledge that "blood would run in the streets of Birmingham before it would be integrated."

In May, thousands of schoolchildren joined King's crusade. The bigoted Connor lost his temper. He unleashed his men—armed with electric cattle prods, high-pressure water hoses, and snarling attack dogs—on the nonviolent demonstrators. The ferocity of Connor's attacks, caught on camera and television,



Birmingham, 1963

President Kennedy said this photograph of an African-American being attacked by a police dog during the protest demonstrations in Birmingham made him "sick." It helped galvanize the nation's conscience, leading Kennedy to submit a comprehensive civil-rights bill to Congress.

horrified the world. When jailed for instigating the march, King penned the “Letter from Birmingham Jail.” It detailed the humiliations of segregation and justified civil disobedience to protest unjust laws.

“The civil-rights movement should thank God for Bull Connor,” JFK remarked. “He’s helped it as much as Abraham Lincoln.” Kennedy arranged a behind-the-scenes compromise ending the Birmingham demonstrations in return for desegregating stores and hiring black workers. By mid-1963, the rallying cry “Freedom Now!” reverberated across the nation as the protests grew. Increasingly concerned about America’s image abroad, Kennedy feared that if the government did not act, blacks would turn to violence. When Alabama governor George Wallace in June 1963 refused to allow two black students to enter the University of Alabama, Kennedy forced Wallace to capitulate to a court desegregation order.

On June 11, the president went on television to define civil rights as “a moral issue” and to assert that “race has no place in American life or law.” A week later, Kennedy proposed a bill outlawing segregation in public facilities and authorizing the federal government to withhold funds from programs that discriminated. As the bill bogged down in Congress, civil-rights adherents planned to march on Washington to muster support for the legislation.

The March on Washington, 1963

To compel Congress to act, nearly 250,000 Americans converged on the Capitol on August 28, 1963. There they heard the ringing words of **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, proclaiming that he had a dream of brotherhood, of freedom and justice, a dream that “all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, ‘Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!’” King had turned a political rally into a historic event with one of the great speeches of history.

However, neither Kennedy’s nor King’s eloquence could quell the anger of white racists. On the night of the president’s address, civil-rights leader Medgar Evers was murdered by a sniper in Jackson, Mississippi. In September, the bombing of a black church in Birmingham killed four girls. And still, southern obstructionism kept the civil-rights bill stymied in Congress.

The Civil Rights at High Tide

Kennedy’s assassination brought to the White House a southerner, Lyndon Johnson, who knew he had to prove himself on the race issue or the liberals “would get me . . . I had to produce a civil rights bill that was even stronger than the one they’d have gotten if Kennedy had lived.”

The resulting **Civil Rights Act**, the most significant civil-rights law in U.S. history, banned racial discrimination and segregation in public accommodations. It outlawed bias in federally funded programs, granted the federal government new powers to fight school segregation, and created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce a ban on job discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or gender.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Baptist minister whose leadership galvanized the modern, grass-roots civil-rights movement in the 1960s

Civil Rights Act Major legislation that created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not address the right to vote. Therefore, Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) activists, believing that the ballot box held the key to power for southern blacks, mounted a major campaign to register black voters. They organized the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project of 1964 to focus on the state most hostile to black rights. One thousand college-student volunteers assisted blacks in registering to vote and in organizing “Freedom Schools” that taught black history and emphasized African-American self-worth. Harassed by Mississippi law enforcement officials and Ku Klux Klansmen, the volunteers endured the firebombing of black churches and civil-rights headquarters as well as arrests and even murders.

The civil-rights workers enrolled nearly sixty thousand disfranchised blacks in the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP). In August 1964, they took their case to the national Democratic convention. But despite stirring testimony from activists like Fannie Lou Hamer, the MFDP was not seated. Rejecting Johnson’s offer of two open delegate seats as a “token” gesture, the disillusioned members of the MFDP walked out of the convention.

Determined to win a strong voting-rights law, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) organized mass protests in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965. Blacks were half the population of Dallas County, where Selma was located, but only 1 percent were registered to vote. Alabama state police stormed into defenseless protesters, who were clubbed, shocked with cattle prods, and tear-gassed. Showcased on TV, the spectacle provoked national outrage and support for a voting-rights bill.

Signed by the president in August, the **Voting Rights Act** invalidated the use of any test or device to deny the vote and authorized federal examiners to register voters in states that had disfranchised blacks. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 dramatically expanded black suffrage, boosting the number of registered black voters in the South from 1 million in 1964 to 3.1 million in 1968, and in the process transformed southern politics (see Map 28.2).

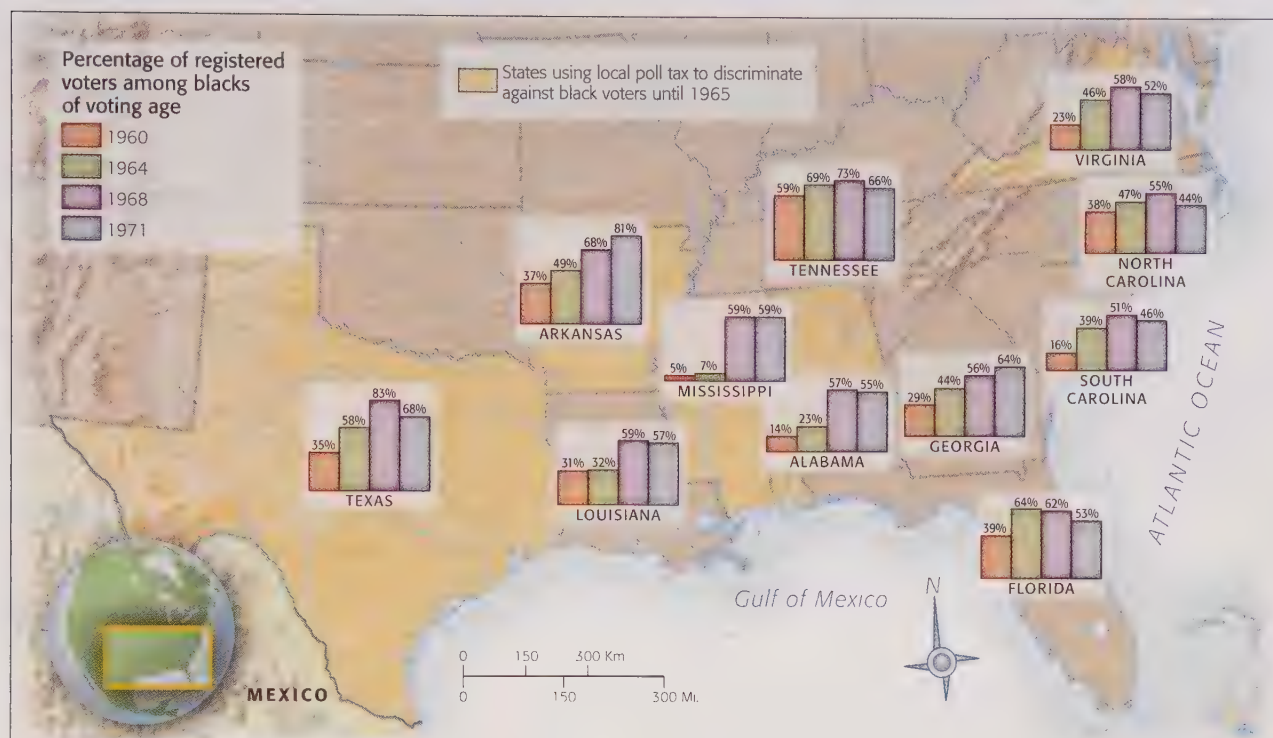
The number of blacks holding office in the South swelled from fewer than two dozen to nearly twelve hundred by 1972. That meant jobs for African-Americans, contracts for black businesses, and improvements in facilities and services in black neighborhoods. Most importantly, as Fannie Lou Hamer recalled, when African-Americans could not vote, “white folks would drive past your house in a pickup truck with guns hanging up in the back and give you hate stares. . . . Those same people now call me Mrs. Hamer.”

Voting Rights Act Law that allowed the federal government to protect the right of blacks to vote; transformed southern politics

Fire in the Streets

The civil-rights movement changed, but did not revolutionize, race relations. It ended legal segregation and broke the monopoly on political power in the South held by whites. Although the movement raised hopes for the possibility of greater change, its inability to transform equality of opportunity into equality of results underscored the limitations of liberal change, especially in the urban ghetto. The movement did not bring African-Americans economic equality or material well-being, and the anger bubbling below the surface soon boiled over.

On August 11, 1965, five days after the Voting Rights Act had been signed, a confrontation between white police and young blacks in Watts, the largest



Map 28.2 Voter Registration of African-Americans in the South, 1960–1971

As blacks overwhelmingly registered as Democrats, some former segregationist politicians, among them George Wallace, started to court the African-American vote, and many southern whites began to cast their ballots for Republicans, inaugurating an era of real two-party competition in the South.

Interactive Map

African-American district in Los Angeles, ignited the most destructive race riot in decades. For six days, blacks looted shops, firebombed white-owned businesses, and sniped at police officers and firefighters. When the riot ended, thirty-four people were dead, nine hundred injured, and four thousand arrested.

Watts proved to be just a prelude to a succession of “long hot summers.” In summer 1966, rioting erupted in more than a score of northern ghettos, forcing whites to heed the squalor of the slums and the savage behavior of police in the ghetto—problems that the civil-rights movement had ignored. The following summer brought nearly 150 racial outbreaks and forty riots—the worst in Detroit, where forty-three people died—the most intense and destructive period of racial violence that the United States had ever witnessed. In 1968, riots would flare again in more than one hundred cities after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. The 1964–1968 riot toll would include two hundred dead, seven thousand injured, forty thousand arrested, and at least \$500 million worth of property wrecked.

A frightened, bewildered nation asked why such rioting occurred just when blacks were achieving many of their goals. Militant blacks saw the uprisings as revolutionary violence directed at a racist society. Conservatives described them as senseless outbursts by troublemakers. The National Advisory Commission on

Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission) indicted white racism for fostering “an explosive mixture” of poverty, slum housing, poor education, and police brutality. The commission recommended increased federal spending to create new jobs for urban blacks, construct additional public housing, and end *de facto* school segregation in the North. Aware of a swelling white backlash, LBJ ignored the commission’s advice, and most whites approved of his inaction.

Black Power Militant movement for black autonomy and self-respect; rejected the goal of integration

Black Power

For many young African-Americans, liberalism’s response to racial inequality proved “too little, too late.” The demand for **Black Power** that sounded in 1966 paralleled the fury of the urban riots; it expressed the eagerness of militant activists for militant self-defense and rapid social change.

Derived from a long tradition of black nationalism, Black Power owed much to the militant rhetoric and vision of Malcolm X. A former drug addict and street hustler, Malcolm X had converted to the Nation of Islam, or the Black Muslim faith, while in prison. Founded in Detroit in 1931 by Elijah Poole (who took the Islamic name Elijah Muhammad), the Nation of Islam insisted that blacks practice self-discipline and self-respect, and it rejected integration. Malcolm X accordingly urged African-Americans to separate themselves from the “white devil” and to take pride in their African roots and their blackness. Blacks, he claimed, had to rely on armed self-defense and had to seize their freedom “by any means necessary.” Malcolm X’s assassination by members of the Nation of Islam in February 1965, after he had broken with Elijah Muhammad, did not still his voice. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965) became the main text for the rising Black Power movement.

Inspired by Malcolm X, many young, urban blacks abandoned reformist strategies and became more militant. In 1966, CORE and SNCC changed from interracial organizations committed to achieving integration to all-black groups advocating racial separatism and Black Power. Even more militant was the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, organized that year, which urged black men to overthrow their oppressors by becoming “panthers—smiling, cunning, scientific, striking by night and sparing no one.” Violent confrontations with police left some Black Panthers dead and many more in prison—further splintering the black-white civil-rights alliance and contributing to the rightward turn in politics.

Black Power advocates had a real impact on African-American life. They helped to organize self-help groups, establish black studies programs, and encourage African-Americans to see that “black is beautiful.”



Bobby Seale and Huey Newton

Founded by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton in Oakland, California, in response to police brutality against African-Americans, the Black Panther Party was organized along semi-military lines and advocated fighting for black justice, in Newton’s words, “through the barrel of a gun.”

AP Photo

This message, and Black Power's critique of American society, resonated with other marginalized groups and helped shape their protests.

The Struggle Goes On

As a result of civil-rights activism, millions of blacks experienced significant upward mobility. In 1965, black students accounted for under 5 percent of total college enrollment; by 1990 the figure had risen to 12 percent, close to their proportion in the general population. TV's *The Cosby Show*, a late-1980s comedy in which Bill Cosby played a doctor married to a lawyer, portrayed this upwardly mobile world.

Outside this world lay the inner-city slums, inhabited by perhaps a third of the black population. Here, up to half the young people never finished high school, and the jobless rate soared as high as 60 percent. Cocaine and other drugs pervaded the inner cities. Some black children recruited as lookouts for drug dealers eventually became dealers themselves. With drugs also came violence. In the 1980s, a young black male was six times as likely to be murdered as a young white male. Drug abuse affected all social levels, including yuppies and show-business celebrities. But drug use and trafficking particularly devastated the inner cities.

To compensate for past racial discrimination, some cities set aside a percentage of building contracts for minority businesses. Some educational institutions reserved slots for minority applicants. These so-called **affirmative action** programs faced court challenges, however. In *Bakke v. University of California* (1978), the Supreme Court declared strict racial quotas unconstitutional. The Court did, however, uphold programs to encourage minority businesses or minority-student enrollment in higher education, so long as they did not involve specific quotas.

affirmative action Programs that promote opportunities for minorities

CHECKING IN

- The civil-rights movement gained momentum with the violent reactions to nonviolent protests, as well as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.
- The Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 transformed southern politics.
- Race riots stunned the nation from 1965 to 1968.
- Radical leaders like Malcolm X and groups like the Black Panthers emerged to proclaim Black Power and challenge the nonviolent wing of the movement.
- Some African Americans made great gains in education and the professions, but many remained trapped in poverty.

THE EXPANDING MOVEMENT FOR EQUALITY

How and why did the protest movements of minorities shift from the goals and tactics associated with Martin Luther King, Jr., to those of Black Power?

Native Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Asian-Americans were similarly affected by liberalism. They, too, were inspired by Kennedy's rhetoric, by Johnson's actions, and by the assertive outlook of Black Power. Each followed the black lead in challenging the status quo, demanding full and equal citizenship rights, and emphasizing group identity and pride. And like blacks, each group saw its younger members push for ever more radical action.

Native American Activism

In 1961, representatives of sixty-seven tribes drew up a Declaration of Purposes, and in 1964 hundreds of Indians assembled in Washington to lobby for recognition in the war on poverty. Indians suffered the worst poverty, the highest disease and

death rates, and the poorest education and housing of any American group. President Johnson established the National Council on Indian Opportunity in 1965. It funneled more federal funds onto reservations than any previous program.

Militant Native Americans, meanwhile, began to organize. By 1968, younger Indian activists, calling themselves “Native Americans,” demanded “Red Power.” They protested the lack of protection for Indian land and water rights, and the desecration of Indian sacred sites. They established reservation cultural programs to reawaken spiritual beliefs and teach native languages. The Puyallup (pyoo-AL-up) asserted old treaty rights to fish in the Columbia River and Puget Sound. The Navajo and Hopi protested strip-mining in the Southwest.

American Indian Movement

(AIM) Group that attracted attention to problems facing Native Americans by occupying Alcatraz

The most militant group, the **American Indian Movement (AIM)**, was founded in 1968 by Chippewas, Sioux, and Ojibwa living in and around Minneapolis. Among its goals was preventing police harassment of Indians in urban “red ghettos.” To dramatize the Indian cause, in late 1969 an armed AIM contingent occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, citing a treaty right, and held the island for nineteen months. AIM’s militancy aroused other Native Americans to be proud of their heritage. Building on their occupation of Alcatraz Island, members of the militant American Indian Movement briefly occupied the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington in 1972. In response to spreading protests, the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1974 granted tribes control of federal aid programs on the reservations and oversight of their own schools.

Many of the eight hundred thousand who identified themselves as Indians in the 1970 census did so for the first time, and by 1990 their number had soared to 1.7 million. This upsurge reflected ethnic pride, as well as the economic advantages associated with tribal membership. Under a 1961 law, tribes launched ventures ranging from gambling resorts to mining and logging operations. Many also reasserted long-ignored treaty rights, resulting in a gain of 40 million acres for Alaskan Indians in 1971. Although high rates of joblessness, alcoholism, and disease persisted among Indians, renewed pride and progress in asserting treaty rights offered hope. In the popular culture, movies such as *Little Big Man* (1970) and *Dances with Wolves* (1990), while idealizing Indians, represented an improvement over the negative stereotypes of earlier films.

Hispanic-Americans Organize

As occurred earlier in American history, immigration swelled the ranks of minority groups in the second half of the twentieth century. Of enormous significance, Congress

Immigration Act of 1965 Did away with national-origins quotas and increased legal immigration

enacted the **Immigration Act of 1965**, abolishing the national-origins quotas of the 1920s. Annual legal immigration would increase from about 250,000 before the act to well over 1 million, and the vast majority of new immigrants would come from Asia and Latin America. The Latino, or Hispanic-American, population increased from 4.5 percent in 1970 to nearly 12 percent in 2000. Although less than 1 percent of the U.S. population in 1960, Asian-Americans (discussed in the next section) comprised more than 4 percent in 2000. During the 1960s, these groups contributed to the general spirit of activism.

Like Native Americans, Latinos—the fastest-growing minority—became impatient with their establishment organizations, which had been unable to better

their dismal conditions. As they turned to the more militant tactics of the civil-rights movement, Latinos found a charismatic leader in **César Estrada Chávez** (SAY-zar SHAH-vez).

Born on an Arizona farm first cultivated in the 1880s by his grandfather, Chávez grew up a migrant farm worker, joined the U.S. navy in World War II, and then devoted himself to improved working conditions for the mostly Mexican-American farm laborers in California. A magnetic leader, Chávez led a strike against vineyards in the San Joaquin valley in 1965. With United Farm Workers (UFW) cofounder Dolores Huerta, he organized consumer boycotts of table grapes to dramatize the farm workers' struggle, often referred to as *La Causa*. For the first time, farm workers gained the right to unionize to secure better wages; by mid-1970, two-thirds of California grapes were grown under UFW contracts.

Also in the mid-1960s, young Hispanic activists began using the formerly pejorative terms “Chicano” and “Chicana” to express a militant collective identity. Rejecting assimilation, Chicano student organizations came together in 1967 in *El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (MEChA). MEChA demanded bilingual education and more Latino teachers in high schools as well as Chicano studies programs and organizations at colleges. Similar zeal led Jose Angel Gutierrez and others in Texas to create an alternative political party in 1967, *La Raza Unida*, to elect Latinos and instill cultural pride. Across the West, Hispanic-American activists created the “brown is beautiful” vogue and the paramilitary Brown Berets, with conceptual roots in the Black Panthers.

Similarly inspired, Puerto Ricans in New York City founded the Young Lords. Modeled on the Black Panthers, the Young Lords published a newspaper, started drug treatment programs, and even hijacked ambulances and occupied a hospital to demand better medical services in the South Bronx.

Meanwhile, a steady influx of immigrants, both legal and illegal, continued to arrive in the United States. Where most had once come from Europe, some 45 percent now came from the Western Hemisphere and 30 percent from Asia. As in the past, economic need drew these newcomers. Mexico's chronic poverty forced many to seek jobs in the north. But life in the United States was often harsh. Millions of Hispanic immigrants lacked official documentation. Many sweated in the garment trades, cleaned houses, held low-paying service-sector jobs, and labored in agricultural fields. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, an update of the 1965 Immigration Act, outlawed the hiring of undocumented immigrants, but offered legal status to aliens who had lived in the United States for five years.



Arthur Schatz/Tima Life Pictures/Getty Images

Chávez and His Heroes Robert Kennedy and Mohandas Gandhi

César Chávez, from a farm worker family, founded the United Farm Workers to help migrant Mexican farm hands, who worked long hours for meager pay. Chávez and his followers won the enactment in 1975 of a California law requiring growers to bargain collectively with the elected representatives of the farm workers.

César Estrada Chávez Leader of United Farm Workers

Asian-American Activism

Among the rapidly climbing number of immigrants from Asia some, like the Hmong (**mong**), the indigenous people of Indochina who had supported the United States in the Vietnam War, came mainly for political reasons; others, like those from South Korea and the Philippines, came primarily for economic betterment. Valuing education, many Asian immigrants advanced academically and economically.

Like their counterparts, young activists with roots in the Far East rejected the term “Oriental” and adopted “Asian-American” to signify a new ethnic consciousness. Formed at the University of California in 1968, the Asian American Political Alliance encouraged Asian-American students to claim their own cultural identity. As did other ethnic groups, Asian-American students marched, sat in, and went on strike to gain courses on Asian-American studies. Others agitated to force the United States to make restitution for the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

None of these movements for ethnic pride and power, in later decades, would sustain the fervent activism and media attention they attracted in the late 1960s. But by elevating the consciousness and nurturing the confidence of the younger generation, each contributed to the empowerment of its respective group and to the politics of identity that would continue to grow in importance.

- The American Indian Movement occupied Alcatraz, while Indian self-identification increased and long-ignored treaty rights were reasserted.
- César Chávez’s successful effort to unionize Latino farm workers was part of a trend toward a more militant collective Chicano identity.
- The activism of Hispanic-American groups like *La Raza Unida* and the Young Lords reflected the influence of Black Power.
- Like Hispanic groups, Asian-Americans molded racial solidarity and created organizations to serve their communities.

Lyndon Baines Johnson

Thirty-sixth president of the United States; champion of civil-rights legislation and the “war on poverty”

LIBERALISM ASCENDANT, 1963–1968

How did Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society program exemplify the new liberalism of the 1960s?

Distrusted by liberals as “a Machiavelli in a Stetson,” and regarded as a usurper by Kennedy loyalists, **Lyndon Baines Johnson** achieved his highest ambition through the assassination of a popular president in Johnson’s home state of Texas. Although just nine years older than Kennedy, he seemed a relic of the past, a back-room wheeler-dealer as crude as his predecessor was smooth.

Yet Johnson had substantial political assets. He had served in Washington almost continuously since 1932, accruing enormous experience and a close association with the Capitol Hill power brokers who helped pass bills. He excelled at wooing allies, neutralizing opponents, forging coalitions, and achieving results.

Johnson’s first three years in office demonstrated his determination to prove himself to liberals. He deftly handled the transition of power, won a landslide victory in 1964, and guided through Congress the greatest array of liberal legislation in U.S. history, surpassing the New Deal agenda. Nevertheless, LBJ’s swollen yet fragile ego could not abide the sniping of Kennedy loyalists and the press. Wondering aloud, “Why don’t people like me?” Johnson pressed to vanquish all foes at home and abroad. Ironically, in seeking consensus and affection, Johnson would divide the nation and leave office repudiated.

Johnson Takes Over

Calling for early passage of the tax-cut and civil-rights bills as a memorial to Kennedy, Johnson used his legislative skills to good effect, winning passage of the

Civil Rights Act of 1964 (discussed earlier) and a \$10 billion tax-reduction bill, which produced a surge in capital investment and personal consumption that spurred economic growth and shrank the budget deficit. More boldly, Johnson declared “unconditional **war on poverty** in America.”

Largely invisible in an affluent country, according to Michael Harrington’s *The Other America* (1962), some 40 million people lived in a “culture of poverty,” lacking the education, medical care, and employment opportunities that most Americans took for granted. LBJ championed a campaign to bring these “internal exiles” into the mainstream. Designed to offer a “hand up, not a handout,” the Economic Opportunity Act established the Office of Economic Opportunity to fund and coordinate a job corps to train young people in marketable skills; VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), a domestic peace corps; Project Head Start, to provide compensatory education for preschoolers from disadvantaged families; and an assortment of public-works and training programs.

Summing up his goals in 1964, Johnson offered his vision of the **Great Society**. First, he stated, must come “an end to poverty and racial injustice.” In addition, the Great Society would be a place where all children could enrich their minds, where people could renew their contact with nature, and where all would be “more concerned with the quality of their goals than the quantity of their goods.”

The 1964 Election

Johnson’s Great Society horrified the “new conservatives,” such as William F. Buckley, Jr., and the college students of Young Americans for Freedom. The most persuasive critic was Arizona senator **Barry Goldwater**, a western outsider fighting the Washington establishment, a fervent anticommunist, and an advocate of individual freedom. His opposition to big government, deficit spending, racial liberalism, and social-welfare programs found receptive audiences on Sun Belt golf courses and in working-class neighborhoods.

Johnson’s advocacy of civil rights frightened southern segregationists and blue-collar workers in northern cities who dreaded the integration of their neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. Their support of Alabama’s segregationist governor George Wallace in early 1964 presidential primaries heralded a “white backlash” against the civil-rights movement.

Buoyed by this backlash, conservatives in 1964 gained control of the GOP. They nominated Barry Goldwater for the presidency and adopted a platform totally opposed to liberalism. Goldwater extolled his opposition to civil-rights legislation, denounced the

war on poverty Centerpiece of LBJ’s Great Society

Great Society LBJ’s dream of an American society of equality and opportunity

Barry Goldwater Arizona senator and Republican whose loss in the 1964 presidential election unified conservatives



Lyndon Baines Johnson LBJ Library and Museum

The LBJ Treatment

Not content unless he could wholly dominate friend as well as foe, Lyndon Johnson used his body as well as his voice to bend others to his will and gain his objectives.

war on poverty, and hinted that he might use nuclear weapons against Cuba and North Vietnam. Goldwater's stance appealed to those angered by the Cold War stalemate, by the erosion of traditional moral values, and by the increasing militancy of African-Americans. But Goldwater's more extreme views made Johnson look like the apostle of restraint. Goldwater's campaign slogan, "In your heart you know he's right," allowed his liberal opponents to quip, "In your guts, you know he's nuts."

LBJ won a landslide victory, capturing 43 million votes to Goldwater's 27 million. The GOP lost thirty-eight congressional and two Senate seats. Many proclaimed the death of conservatism. But Goldwater's coalition of antigovernment westerners, economic and religious conservatives, and anti-integrationist whites presaged conservatism's future triumph. His candidacy transformed the Republicans from a moderate, eastern-dominated party to one decidedly conservative, southern, and western. It built a national base of financial support for conservative candidates and mobilized future leaders of the party, such as Ronald Reagan. But in the short run, the liberals controlled all three branches of government.

The Great Society

"Hurry, boys, hurry," LBJ urged his aides. "Get that legislation up to the hill and out. Eighteen months from now ol' Landslide Lyndon will be Lame Duck Lyndon." Johnson

flooded Congress with liberal proposals, and he got most of what he requested.

The Eighty-ninth Congress enlarged the war on poverty and passed another milestone civil-rights act. It enacted **Medicare** to provide health insurance for the aged under social security and a Medicaid health plan for the poor. By 1975, the two would serve 47 million people and account for a quarter of the nation's health-care expenditures. The legislators appropriated funds for public education and housing and for urban revitalization, and they created new Departments of Transportation and of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities.

The Great Society also sought to protect the environment. Johnson won the enactment of measures to control air and water pollution, protect endangered species, set aside millions of acres of wilderness, and preserve the natural beauty of the American landscape. As noted, Congress enacted the Immigration Act of 1965, abandoning the quota system enacted in the 1920s that had discriminated against Asians and southern and eastern Europeans, thereby transforming America's racial and ethnic kaleidoscope.

The Great Society improved the lives of millions. The poor, 22 percent of the population in 1960, shrank to 13 percent in 1969. African-American family income rose from 54 percent to 61 percent of white family income, and the segment of blacks living below the poverty line plummeted from 40 percent to 20 percent. But because Johnson oversold the Great Society and Congress underfunded it, rising expectations outdistanced results.

For many in need, the Great Society remained more a dream than a reality. The war against poverty was, in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "shot down on the battle-fields of Vietnam." In 1966, Johnson spent twenty times more to wage war in Vietnam than to fight poverty in the United States. Yet the perceived liberality of federal spending and the "ungratefulness" of rioting blacks, as well as the intrusive

Medicare Government health insurance for the elderly

rulings of the Supreme Court, alienated many middle- and working-class whites. The Democrats' loss of forty-seven House seats in 1966 ended the sway of congressional liberalism.

The Liberalism of the Warren Court

The Supreme Court—led by Chief Justice Earl Warren, who was far more liberal than public opinion or Congress—supported an activist government to protect the disadvantaged and accused criminals and expanded individual rights to a greater extent than ever before in American history.

In landmark cases, the Court prohibited Bible reading and prayer in public schools, limited local power to censor books and films, and overturned state bans on contraceptives. It ordered states to apportion legislatures on the principle of “one person, one vote,” increasing the representation of urban minorities.

The Court's upholding of the rights of the accused in criminal cases, at a time of soaring crime rates, particularly incensed many Americans. Criticism of the Supreme Court reached a climax in 1966 when it ruled in *Miranda v. Arizona* that police must advise suspects of their right to remain silent and to have counsel during questioning. In 1968, both Richard Nixon and George Wallace would win favor by promising to appoint judges who emphasized “law and order” over individual liberties.

Miranda v. Arizona Supreme Court ruling protecting the rights of the accused

CHECKING IN

- LBJ declared war on poverty and enlarged New Frontier social goals; his landslide victory in 1964 augmented the Democrats' ruling majority.
- The Great Society marked enormous expansion of federal programs for the poor, elderly, and disadvantaged.
- Rules to protect the environment were established.
- In cases that banned prayer in public schools and protected the rights of the accused, the Warren Court continued to pursue a liberal, activist course.
- Increasing involvement in Vietnam doomed the Great Society.

THE VIETNAM CRUSADE, 1961–1975

How and why did Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon each deepen America's involvement in the war in Indochina?

The activist liberals who boldly tried to uplift the downtrodden also went to war to contain communism in Vietnam. The nation's longest war, and most controversial, would shatter the liberal consensus and divide the United States as nothing had since the Civil War.

Origins and Causes

American involvement in Vietnam grew out of the containment policy to stop the spread of communism. First as a means of strengthening America's anti-Soviet ally France, President Truman authorized U.S. aid for French efforts to reestablish its colonial rule in Indochina. After the outbreak of war in Korea, Truman ordered vastly increased assistance for the French army fighting the Vietminh, a broad-based Vietnamese nationalist coalition led by the communist Ho Chi Minh. By 1954, the United States was paying three-quarters of the French war costs in Vietnam.

But the French were losing. In early 1954, the Vietminh besieged twelve thousand French troops in the valley of Dien Bien Phu. France appealed for U.S. intervention, and some American officials toyed with the idea of a nuclear strike, which President Eisenhower flatly rejected. In May, the French surrendered at Dien Bien Phu.

An international conference in Geneva arranged a cease-fire and divided Vietnam at the seventeenth parallel, pending elections in 1956 to choose the government of a unified nation.

domino theory The belief that if Vietnam fell to the communists, all of Asia would follow

Although unwilling to go to war, Eisenhower would not accept a communist takeover of Vietnam. In what became known as the **domino theory**, Eisenhower warned that, if Vietnam fell to the communists, then Thailand, Burma, Indonesia, and ultimately all of Asia would follow. The United States refused to sign the Geneva Peace Accords and in late 1954 created the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a military alliance patterned on NATO.

In June 1954, the CIA installed Ngo Dinh Diem (**woh din dee-EM**), a fiercely anticommunist Catholic, as premier and then president of an independent South Vietnam. CIA agents helped him eliminate political opposition and block the election to reunify Vietnam specified by the Geneva agreements. As Eisenhower later admitted, “possibly 80 percent of the population would have voted for the communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader.” Washington pinned its hopes on Diem to maintain a noncommunist South Vietnam with American dollars rather than American lives.

But the autocratic Diem’s Catholicism alienated the predominantly Buddhist population, and his refusal to institute land reform and end corruption spurred opposition. In December 1960, opposition to Diem coalesced in the **National Liberation Front (NLF)**. Backed by North Vietnam, the insurgency attracted broad support and soon controlled half of South Vietnam.

National Liberation Front (NLF) Insurgent political organization in South Vietnam devoted to overthrowing the government

Kennedy and Vietnam

Following the 1962 compromise settlement in Laos, President Kennedy resolved, as had President Eisenhower, not to give further ground in Southeast Asia. He ordered massive shipments of weapons to South Vietnam and increased the number of clandestine American forces there from less than seven hundred in early 1961 to more than sixteen thousand by late 1963. He accepted Eisenhower’s “domino theory” and viewed international communism as a monolithic force, a single global entity controlled by Moscow and Beijing. He wanted to prove that the United States was not the “paper tiger” mocked by Mao Zedong.

To counter communist gains in the countryside, the United States used both chemical defoliants and napalm to destroy vegetation and expose the enemy. It also uprooted Vietnamese peasants and moved them into fortified villages. But South Vietnamese president Diem rejected American pressure to gain popular support through reform measures, instead crushing demonstrations by students and Buddhists. By mid-1963, Buddhist monks were setting themselves on fire to protest Diem’s repression, and Diem’s own generals were plotting a coup (**coo**).

Frustrated American policy makers concluded that only a new government could stave off a **Vietcong** victory and secretly backed the coup efforts. On November 1, military leaders staged their coup, captured Diem and his brother, and shot them. Although the United States promptly recognized the new government, it made little headway against the Vietcong. JFK now faced two unpalatable alternatives: to use American combat forces or to withdraw and seek a negotiated settlement.

What Kennedy would have done remains unknown. Less than a month after Diem’s death, John F. Kennedy himself fell to an assassin’s bullet. His admirers

Vietcong Military wing of the National Liberation Front; guerilla army amassed against South Vietnamese and American forces

contend that by late 1963 he was favoring the withdrawal of American forces after the 1964 election. “It is their war . . . it is their people and their government who have to win or lose the struggle,” he proclaimed. Yet the president then restated the domino theory and promised that the United States would not withdraw from the conflict. Virtually all his closest advisers held that an American victory was essential to check communism in Asia. They would counsel Kennedy’s successor accordingly.

Lyndon Johnson’s Endless War

While privately describing Vietnam as “a raggedy-ass fourth-rate country,” LBJ feared that an all-out American military effort might lead to World War III. He foresaw

that full-scale U.S. engagement in “that bitch of a war” would destroy “the woman I really loved—the Great Society.” Yet Johnson saw his own credibility on the line. He worried that a pullout would make him appear cowardly, threaten his liberal agenda, and leave him vulnerable to conservative accusations that he was “soft” on communism.

Trapped between unacceptable alternatives, Johnson expanded the war, hoping that U.S. firepower would force Ho Chi Minh to the bargaining table. But the North Vietnamese calculated that they could gain more by outlasting the United States than by negotiating.

In 1964, LBJ took bold steps to impress the North Vietnamese with American resolve and to block his opponent, Barry Goldwater, from capitalizing on Vietnam in the presidential campaign. In May his advisers drafted a congressional resolution authorizing an escalation of American military action, and in July LBJ appointed General Maxwell Taylor, an advocate of greater American involvement, as ambassador to Saigon.

In early August, North Vietnamese patrol boats reportedly clashed with two U.S. destroyers patrolling the Gulf of Tonkin (**TAWN-kin**). Evidence of the attack was unclear. Never admitting that the U.S. destroyers had been aiding the South Vietnamese in clandestine raids against North Vietnam, the president condemned the attacks as unprovoked and called on Congress to pass the previously prepared resolution giving him the authority to “take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.” Assured that this power would lead to no “extension of the present conflict,” the Senate passed the **Gulf of Tonkin Resolution** by a vote of 98 to 2, and the House by 416 to 0. Privately, Johnson called the resolution “grandma’s nightshirt—it covered everything.” He considered it a blank check to commit U.S. forces as he saw fit.

Early in 1965, Johnson ordered “Operation Rolling Thunder,” the sustained bombing of North Vietnam. The United States dropped eight hundred tons of bombs daily on North Vietnam from 1965 to 1968, three times the tonnage used by all combatants in World War II. However, it neither convinced Hanoi to negotiate nor stopped the flow of soldiers and supplies southward from North Vietnam.

Unable to turn the tide by bombing, Johnson committed U.S. combat troops. Adopting a “meat-grinder” or attrition strategy, Johnson sought to inflict unacceptable casualties on the communists to force them to the peace table. Johnson sent 485,000 troops to Vietnam by the end of 1967. But North Vietnam matched each American troop increase with its own, and there was no end in sight.

Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

“Blank check” for LBJ to wage war in Vietnam



Paul Step/Library of Congress

LBJ Haunted by Vietnam

As each step up the escalation ladder led to the next, and then the next, President Johnson increasingly felt trapped—caught in a war that he could not win and that was destroying his dream of a Great Society.

First on college campuses and then in the wider society, a growing number of Americans began to oppose the Vietnam War. In March 1965, students and faculty at the University of Michigan staged the first teach-in to raise questions about U.S. involvement. Later that spring, twenty-five thousand people, mainly students, rallied in Washington to protest the escalation. In 1966, large-scale campus antiwar protests erupted. Students demonstrated against the draft and university research for the Pentagon.

Intellectuals and clergy joined the chorus of opposition to the war. Some decried the massive bombing of an undeveloped nation, some doubted that the United States could win at any reasonable cost, and some feared the demise of liberalism. In 1967, prominent critics, including Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., spurred hundreds of thousands to participate in antiwar protests.

Critics noted that the war fell especially hard on the poor. Owing to college deferments, the use of influence, and a military-assignment system that shunted the better educated to desk jobs, lower-class youths

were twice as likely to be drafted and, when drafted, twice as likely to see combat duty as middle-class youths.

TV coverage of the war further eroded support. Scenes of children maimed by U.S. bombs and of dying Americans, replayed in living rooms night after night, undercut the optimistic reports of government officials. Americans shuddered as they watched U.S. troops, supposedly winning the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese, burn villages and leave thousands of civilians mutilated or dead.

Yet for every protestor shouting “Hell No, We Won’t Go!” many more war supporters affixed bumper stickers reading “America, Love It or Leave It!” Until 1968, most Americans either supported the war or remained undecided.

Equally disturbing was how polarized the nation had grown. “**Hawks**” would accept little short of total victory, whereas “**doves**” insisted on negotiating, not fighting. Civility vanished. Demonstrators paraded past the White House chanting, “Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?” By 1968, the president had become a prisoner in the White House, unable to speak in public without being shouted down. So ended an era of hope and liberalism.

“**hawks**” Term for those who supported American goals in the Vietnam War

“**doves**” Term for opponents of American military involvement in Vietnam

Eugene McCarthy

Minnesota senator opposed to the Vietnam War; challenged LBJ in the 1968 Democratic primaries

The Tet Offensive and a Shaken President

In January 1968, liberal Democratic senator **Eugene McCarthy** of Minnesota, a Vietnam War critic, announced that he would challenge LBJ for the presidential

nomination. Pundits scoffed that McCarthy had no chance of unseating Johnson, who had won the presidency in 1964 by the largest margin in U.S. history. But McCarthy persisted, determined that at least one Democrat enter the primaries on an antiwar platform.

Suddenly, America's hopes for victory in Vietnam sank, and with them LBJ's political fortunes. On January 31—the Vietnamese New Year—National Liberation Front (NLF) and North Vietnamese forces mounted a huge offensive, attacking more than a hundred South Vietnamese cities and towns, and even the U.S. embassy in Saigon. U.S. and South Vietnamese troops repulsed the **Tet Offensive** after a month of ferocious fighting, inflicting a major military defeat on the communists (see Map 28.3).

Victory, however, came at an enormous psychological cost. The dramatic initial reports of the media, highlighting the number of American casualties, undercut Johnson's and General Westmoreland's claims of imminent victory. The Tet Offensive deepened the growing mood of gloom about the war and intensified doubts that the United States could win at an acceptable cost. Public approval of the president's conduct of the war fell to just 26 percent in the immediate aftermath of the Tet Offensive.

After the Tet Offensive, McCarthy's criticism of the war won many new sympathizers. *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *Wall Street Journal* published editorials urging a negotiated settlement. The nation's most respected newscaster, Walter Cronkite of CBS, observed that "it seems now more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate." "If I've lost Walter," LBJ sighed, "then it's over. I've lost Mr. Average Citizen." The number of Americans who described themselves as prowar "hawks" slipped from 62 percent in January to 41 percent in March, whereas the antiwar "doves" jumped from 22 percent to 42 percent.

Beleaguered, Johnson pondered a change in American policy. When the Joint Chiefs of Staff sought an additional 206,000 men for Vietnam, he turned to old friends for advice. Dean Acheson, the former secretary of state and a venerable Cold Warrior, told him, "The Joint Chiefs of Staff don't know what they're talking about."

Meanwhile, nearly five thousand college students swarmed to New Hampshire to stuff envelopes and ring doorbells for Eugene McCarthy in the nation's first primary contest. McCarthy astonished the experts by winning nearly half the popular vote in the primary contest of a state usually regarded as conservative.

After this upset, twice as many students converged on Wisconsin to canvass its more liberal voters. Expecting Johnson to lose, Senator **Robert Kennedy**, also promising to end the war, entered the Democratic contest. Projecting the familiar Kennedy glamour and magnetism, Kennedy was the one candidate whom Johnson feared could deny him re-nomination. Indeed, millions viewed Kennedy as the rightful heir to the White House. Appealing to minorities, the poor, and working-class ethnic whites, Kennedy became, according to one columnist, "our first politician for the pariahs, our great national outsider."

On March 31, Johnson surprised a television audience by announcing a halt to the bombing in North Vietnam. Saying that he wanted to devote all of his efforts to the search for peace, Johnson then startingly announced, "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your president." Embittered by the personal abuse that he had endured, and reluctant to polarize the nation further, the president called it quits. Two days later, McCarthy trounced the president in the Wisconsin primary.

Tet Offensive Coordinated attack by North Vietnam that convinced many Americans that the war could not be won

Robert Kennedy Brother of John F. Kennedy and former attorney general



Map 28.3 The Vietnam War

Wishing to guarantee an independent, noncommunist government in South Vietnam, Lyndon Johnson remarked in 1965, “We fight because we must fight if we are to live in a world where every country can shape its own destiny. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next.”

 **Interactive Map**

All but forgotten in retirement, Johnson died of a heart attack in January 1973. In many ways a tragic figure, he had carried out Vietnam policies shaped by his predecessors and received little acclaim for his domestic achievements, especially in civil rights. Although he often displayed high idealism and generosity of spirit, the enduring image of LBJ is that of a crude, overbearing politician with an outsized ego that masked deep insecurities.

Nixon's War

Following his election in 1968, President Richard Nixon plotted a strategy of détente—reduced tensions—with the USSR and China that hinged on ending the Vietnam War.

He understood that the war had sapped American military strength, hurt the economy, hindered U.S. relations abroad, and devastated Lyndon Johnson.

Announcing the Nixon Doctrine in August 1969, the president redefined America's role in the Third World as that of a helpful partner rather than a military protector. It reflected the president's recognition of war weariness by both the electorate and troops in Vietnam. Johnson's decision to negotiate rather than to escalate had left American troops with the sense that little mattered except survival. Morale plummeted. Discipline collapsed. Army desertions rocketed from twenty-seven thousand in 1967 to seventy-six thousand in 1970. Racial conflict became commonplace, and drug use soared. The army reported hundreds of cases of "fragging"—the practice of enlisted men killing officers.

The toll of atrocities against the Vietnamese mounted. In March 1968, an army unit led by an inexperienced lieutenant, William Calley, massacred several hundred



Ronald S. Haberle/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images

The My Lai Massacre

Under the command of First Lieutenant William Calley, the men of Charlie Company entered the small village of My Lai in March 1968 to attack the Vietcong believed to be there. Instead, they found unarmed civilians, mostly women and children, and massacred them. When news of the incident surfaced late in 1969, it became symbolic of the war's brutality and the futility of the U.S. effort in the Vietnam War.

My Lai Vietnamese village where American troops massacred more than four hundred civilians

defenseless civilians in **My Lai** (*mee lie*). Soldiers gang-raped girls, lined up women and children in ditches and shot them, and then burned the village. Revelations of such incidents, and the rising number of returned soldiers who joined Vietnam Veterans Against the War, undercut the already-diminished support for the war.

Despite pressure to end the war, Nixon proved no more willing than his predecessors to accept defeat. Seeking “peace with honor,” he acted on three fronts. First was “Vietnamization,” replacing American troops with South Vietnamese. By 1972 U.S. forces in Vietnam had dropped from half a million to thirty thousand. Second, Nixon bypassed South Vietnamese leaders by sending Kissinger to negotiate secretly with North Vietnam’s foreign minister, Le Duc Tho (*lay duck tow*). Third, to force the communists to compromise despite the U.S. troop withdrawal, Nixon escalated the bombing of North Vietnam and secretly ordered air strikes on North Vietnamese supply routes in Cambodia and Laos.

The secret B-52 raids against Cambodia neither made Hanoi beg for peace nor disrupted communist supply bases. They did, however, undermine the stability of Cambodia, and increase North Vietnam’s infiltration of troops into that tiny republic. Nixon ordered a joint U.S.–South Vietnamese incursion into Cambodia at the end of April 1970. The invaders seized large caches of arms and bought time for Vietnamization. However, the costs were high. The invasion ended Cambodia’s neutrality, widened the war throughout Indochina, and provoked massive American protests, culminating in the student deaths at Kent State and Jackson State.

In February 1971, Nixon had South Vietnamese troops invade Laos to destroy communist bases there. The South Vietnamese were routed. Emboldened, North Vietnam mounted a major campaign in April 1972—the Easter Offensive—their largest since 1968. Nixon retaliated by mining North Vietnam’s harbors and unleashing B-52s on its major cities. He vowed: “The bastards have never been bombed like they are going to be bombed this time.”

America’s Longest War Ends

On October 26, just days before the 1972 presidential election, Kissinger announced that “peace is at hand.” The cease-fire agreement that he had secretly negotiated required the withdrawal of all American troops, provided for the return of U.S. prisoners of war, and allowed North Vietnamese troops to remain in South Vietnam.

Kissinger’s negotiations had sealed Nixon’s reelection, but South Vietnam’s President Thieu (*tyoo*) refused to sign a cease-fire agreement permitting North Vietnamese troops to remain in the South. An angry Le Duc Tho then pressed Kissinger for additional concessions. President Nixon again resorted to B-52 raids. The 1972 Christmas bombings of Hanoi and Haiphong, the most destructive of the war, roused fierce opposition domestically and globally but broke the deadlock.

The Paris Accords signed in late January 1973 essentially restated the terms of the October truce. The agreement ended hostilities between the United States and North Vietnam but left unresolved the differences between North and South Vietnam, guaranteeing that Vietnam’s future would yet be settled on the battlefield. North Vietnamese troops in the spring of 1975 overran South Vietnam, took control of Saigon, and forced American helicopters to airlift the last remaining officials out of the besieged U.S. embassy.

America's longest war had ended in defeat. It left fifty-eight thousand American dead and three hundred thousand wounded. The expenditure of at least \$150 billion (more than \$700 billion in 2009 dollars) had diverted resources from reform and triggered huge budget deficits and inflation. It shattered the liberal consensus and inflamed dissent, indelibly scarring a generation. The war also distanced the United States from its allies. "No more Vietnams" decided many in the military: The United States should not fight abroad unless its national security was clearly at stake, there was demonstrable public support, and it had the necessary means to accomplish the goal.

Virtually all who survived, wrote one marine veteran, returned "as immigrants to a new world. For the culture we had known dissolved while we were in Vietnam, and the culture of combat we lived in so intensely . . . made us aliens when we returned." Beyond media attention on the psychological difficulties of readjusting to civilian life, the nation paid little heed to its Vietnam veterans—reminders of a war that Americans wished to forget.

Eager "to put Vietnam behind us," few gave much thought to the 2 million Vietnamese casualties, or to the suffering in Laos, or the price paid by Cambodia. In 1975, the fanatical Khmer Rouge (*kmair rooj*) (Cambodian communists), led by Pol Pot, took power and turned Cambodia into a genocidal "killing field," murdering some 2 million, an estimated third of the population. "Too many of us have lost touch with the horror of war," complained Tim O'Brien, a veteran and novelist of the war. "But time and distance erode memory. We adjust, we lose the intensity. I fear that we are back where we started. I wish we were more troubled."

CHECKING IN

- The domino theory led the United States to deeper involvement in South Vietnam.
- JFK increased the American military presence in Vietnam and then authorized a military coup against the unpopular Diem regime.
- Pursuant to the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, LBJ escalated ground combat forces until 485,000 troops were in Vietnam by 1968.
- The United States became increasingly polarized between "hawks" and "doves," with college campuses often the site of massive protests.
- The Tet Offensive resulted in tremendous casualties, undermined public support for the war, and essentially ended LBJ's political career.
- The Nixon Doctrine called for a decreased American role in Vietnam, but Nixon stepped up bombing and expanded the war into Cambodia and Laos.
- The Paris Accords ended American military involvement in Vietnam in January 1973.

Chapter Summary

To what extent did the Kennedy administration's domestic record reflect its liberal rhetoric? (page 685)

Stymied by the conservative coalition in Congress, Kennedy did more to stimulate hope than to achieve change. He got few domestic programs through Congress, although the Peace Corps captured American youth's idealism. JFK took a hard line in the Cold War. The Cuban missile crisis proved a sobering moment and opened the way to détente, as well as to an accelerating arms race.

KEY TERMS

John F. Kennedy (p. 685)
 Cuban missile crisis (p. 689)
 Martin Luther King, Jr. (p. 691)
 Civil Rights Act (p. 691)
 Voting Rights Act (p. 692)
 Black Power (p. 694)
 affirmative action (p. 695)
 American Indian Movement (AIM) (p. 696)

What were the major successes and failures of the civil-rights movement from 1961 to 1968? (page 690)

JFK tried to avoid dealing with civil rights but was drawn into quelling violence against black protesters. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech provided inspiration for millions. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 revolutionized southern politics. In the second half of the decade, race riots swept the nation, and radicals like Malcolm X and the Black Panthers emerged to challenge King. After 1965, blacks experienced upward mobility, but the overall poverty rate in the black community remained much higher than among other groups.

How and why did the protest movements of minorities shift from the goals and tactics associated with Martin Luther King, Jr., to those of Black Power? (page 695)

Black Power, which emphasized group identity and pride, inspired other marginalized groups to take action. Native Americans established the American Indian Movement, which dramatized their problems by seizing and occupying Alcatraz. César Chávez organized Latino farm workers, and they gained the right to unionize. Hispanic and Asian students organized and demanded college courses and departments dedicated to their own history.

How did Lyndon Johnson's Great Society program exemplify the new liberalism of the 1960s? (page 698)

Lyndon Johnson's presidency brought the most sweeping reforms since the New Deal. His Great Society legislation promoted health, education, voting rights, urban renewal, immigration reform, federal support for the arts and humanities, protection of the environment, and a war against poverty. The Warren Court continued its activist, liberal course. But race riots at home and increased involvement in Vietnam would spell doom for many Great Society programs.

How and why did Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon each deepen America's involvement in the war in Indochina? (page 701)

Kennedy significantly increased the number of American advisers in Vietnam and authorized a coup to overthrow the unpopular Diem regime. Inheriting a deteriorating limited war from Kennedy, LBJ also chose to escalate America's involvement. Three years later, after an unprecedented bombing campaign and with a half-million American troops in Vietnam, the United States was no closer to achieving its objective, and Richard Nixon would fare no better. Under Nixon, the war dragged on for four more years, until he finally accepted the limitations of U.S. power and withdrew American forces in 1973.

KEY TERMS continued

Immigration Act of 1965 (p. 696)
 César Estrada Chávez (p. 697)
 Lyndon Baines Johnson (p. 698)
 war on poverty (p. 699)
 Great Society (p. 699)
 Barry Goldwater (p. 699)
 Medicare (p. 700)
Miranda v. Arizona (p. 701)
 domino theory (p. 702)
 National Liberation Front (NLF) (p. 702)
 Vietcong (p. 702)
 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (p. 703)
 "hawks" (p. 704)
 "doves" (p. 704)
 Eugene McCarthy (p. 704)
 Tet Offensive (p. 705)
 Robert Kennedy (p. 705)
 My Lai (p. 708)



Go to the CourseMate website at www.cengagebrain.com for additional study tools and review materials—including audio and video clips—for this chapter.

CHAPTER 29

1961–1980

A Time of Upheaval

GIRLS SAY YES



to boys who say NO



National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Gift of William Meers

The Joan Baez Sisters and Draft Resistance

CHAPTER PREVIEW

Coming Apart

What were the major landmarks of the youth movement?

The Countercultural Revolution

In what ways did the counterculture shape the 1960s and 1970s?

Feminism and a Values Revolution

What were the major successes and failures of the Women's Liberation Movement?

A Divided Nation

How did Richard Nixon's political strategy reflect the racial upheavals and radicalism of this era?

Successes Abroad, Crises at Home

What were the main causes of the Watergate scandal?

A Troubled Nation and Presidency

What were the major failures of the Ford and Carter presidencies?

Dorothy Burlage grew up in southeast Texas, a proper southern belle as well as a self-reliant “frontier woman.” Her Southern Baptist parents taught her to conform to the conservative values of her old slaveholding community.

During her college years, Burlage's worldview underwent a dramatic transformation. At the University of Texas she watched with awe as black students her age engaged in a civil-rights struggle she likened to a holy crusade. She left her sorority and joined the Christian Faith-and-Life Community, a group committed to nonviolent radical change. The young activists of the civil-rights movement became her political model, their ethos

her moral beacon. Burlage attended the founding conference of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in 1962. It exhilarated her to be with like-minded idealists, all eager to create a better world. Burlage remained involved in SDS for the rest of the decade until, disillusioned by both the constant need to be “more radical” and the powerful conservative backlash, she ceased her activism and went back to school.

Commitment and then disengagement would be characteristic of many of Dorothy’s peers. The baby boomers in college spawned a tumultuous student movement and convulsive counterculture that gave the 1960s its distinctive aura of upheaval. They exploded the well-kept world of the 1950s, when “nice” girls did not have sex or pursue careers, and when African-Americans feared to vote or assert themselves.

But then came 1968. Like an earthquake, the events of that year brought commitments and optimism crashing down. The decade that had begun with high hopes ended in deep disillusionment. One consequence was a widespread turning inward. Many in Dorothy’s generation became preoccupied with themselves—which again transformed the nation.

Both agent in and beneficiary of the era’s realignment, Republican Richard Nixon would win the presidency in 1968 and then gain an overwhelming reelection victory in 1972. Nixon ended U.S. involvement in Vietnam and inaugurated a period of détente, or reduced tensions, with China and the Soviet Union. In 1974, however, having flouted the very laws he had pledged to uphold, Nixon resigned in disgrace to avoid impeachment. His legacy would be a public disrespect for politics seldom matched in U.S. history.

COMING APART

What were the major landmarks of the youth movement?

By the 1960s, the number of American students pursuing higher education had risen from 1 million in 1940 to 8 million. By then, more than half the U.S. population was under age thirty. Their sheer numbers gave the baby boomers a collective identity and guaranteed that their actions would have an impact.

Most baby boomers followed conventional paths. If they went to college—and fewer than half did—they typically took business and other career-oriented degrees. Whether or not they went to college, the vast majority had their eyes fixed on a good salary, a new car, and a traditional family. Many disdained longhaired protesters and displayed “My Country—Right or Wrong” bumper stickers. Tens of thousands of baby boomers mobilized on the Right, idolizing Barry Goldwater, supporting the war in Vietnam, embracing traditional values, and joining organizations like Young Americans for Freedom (YAF). YAF would be the seedbed of a new generation of conservatives who later gained control of the GOP, yet it was overshadowed in the 1960s by young activists in the New Left.

Toward a New Left

Although a tiny minority of youth, an insurgent band of leftist students got the lion’s share of attention. Initially hopeful, they welcomed the idealism of the civil-rights



Chronology

- 1962** Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) founded
- 1964** Berkeley Free Speech Movement; the Beatles arrive in the United States
- 1966** Abolition of automatic student deferments from the draft
- 1967** March on the Pentagon; Israeli-Arab Six-Day War
- 1968** Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinated; race riots sweep nation; students take over buildings at Columbia University; Robert F. Kennedy assassinated; violence mars Democratic convention in Chicago; Vietnam peace talks open in Paris; Richard Nixon elected president
- 1969** *Apollo 11* lands first Americans on the moon; Nixon begins withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam; Woodstock festival
- 1970** United States invades Cambodia; students killed at Kent State and Jackson State Universities; Beatles disband; Earth Day first celebrated
- 1971** United States invades Laos; *New York Times* publishes Pentagon Papers; Nixon institutes wage-and-price freeze; South Vietnam invades Laos with the help of U.S. air support
- 1972** Nixon visits China and the Soviet Union; SALT I agreement approved; break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters in Watergate complex; Nixon reelected president
- 1973** Vietnam cease-fire agreement signed; Senate establishes special committee to investigate Watergate; President Salvador Allende ousted and murdered in Chile; Vice President Spiro Agnew resigns; Gerald Ford appointed vice president; *Roe v. Wade*; Yom Kippur War; OPEC begins embargo of oil to the West; Saturday Night Massacre
- 1974** House Judiciary Committee votes to impeach Nixon; Nixon resigns; Ford becomes president
- 1975** South Vietnamese government falls; *Mayaguez* incident
- 1976** Jimmy Carter elected president
- 1977** Panama Canal treaties ratified; Gay Pride parades in New York and San Francisco
- 1978** Carter authorizes federal funds to relocate Love Canal residents
- 1979** Menachem Begin and Anwar el-Sadat sign peace treaty at White House; second round of OPEC price increases; accident at Three Mile Island nuclear plant; Carter establishes full diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China; Iran hostage crisis begins

movement, supported the campaign against nuclear testing, answered the rousing call of President Kennedy for service to the nation, and admired the mavericks and outsiders of the 1950s.

In June 1962, some sixty students adopted the Port Huron Statement, a broad critique of American society and a call for more genuine human relationships. Proclaiming themselves “a new left,” they organized the **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)**, which envisioned a nonviolent youth movement transforming the United States into a “participatory democracy” in which individuals would control the decisions that affected their lives. SDS assumed this could lead to the end of consumerism, militarism, and racism.

Many idealistic students never joined SDS and instead associated themselves with what they vaguely called “the movement.” No matter what the label, a generation of activists found its agenda in the Port Huron Statement. Many became radicalized by the rigidity of campus administrators and mainstream liberalism’s inability to

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Student group opposed to militarism and racism; called for “participatory democracy”

achieve swift, fundamental change. Only a radical rejection of the liberal consensus, they presumed, could restructure society and create a genuinely democratic nation.

Berkeley Free Speech Movement (FSM)

(FSM) First major campus protest, which occurred at the University of California, Berkeley

From Protest to Resistance

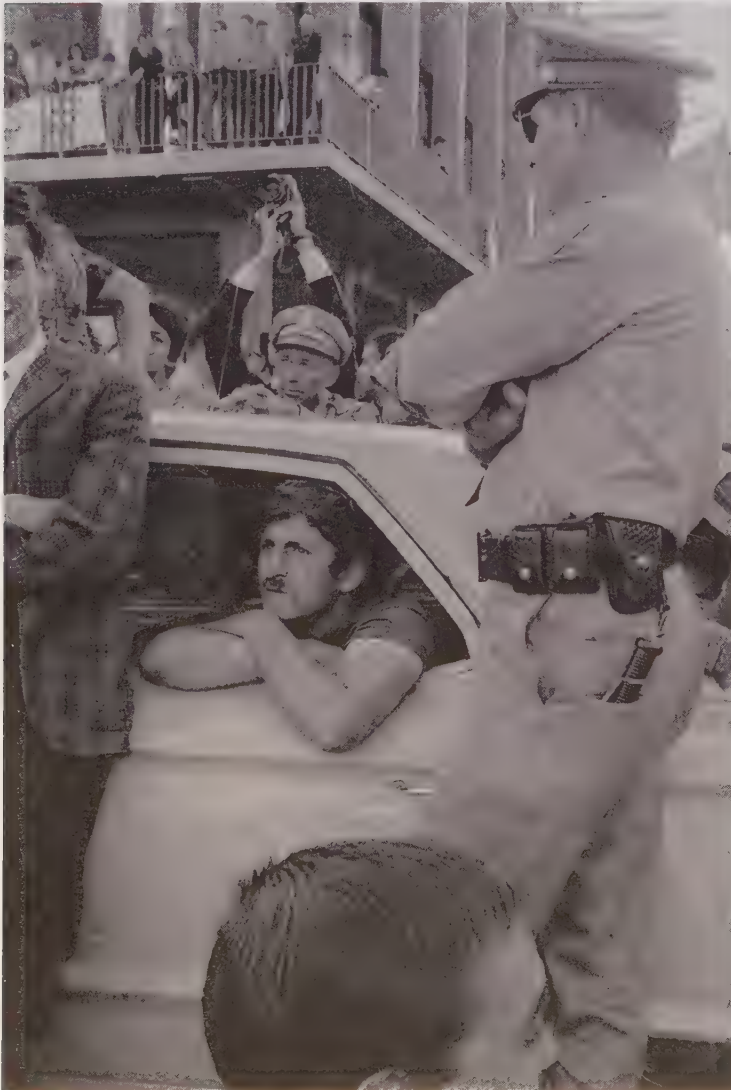
Berkeley graduate student Mario Savio and other student activists tried to solicit funds and recruit volunteers near the campus gate, a spot traditionally open to

The first wave of student protest washed across the campus of the University of California, Berkeley. Returning from the Mississippi Freedom Summer in fall 1964,

political activities. Prodded by local conservatives, university administrators suddenly banned such practices; however, when police arrested one of the activists, students surrounded the police car and kept it from moving. Savio then founded the **Berkeley Free Speech Movement (FSM)**, a coalition of student groups insisting on the right to campus political activity. Savio likened the university to an impersonal machine, and its students to interchangeable machine parts. More than a thousand students then sat-in on the administrative “gears.” Their arrests led to more demonstrations and a strike by nearly 70 percent of the student body.

The demands and tactics of the FSM reverberated on campuses nationwide. Students disenchanted with filing into impersonal buildings to endure lectures from remote professors initiated a wave of protests seeking greater involvement in university affairs. Their objectives changed the character of American higher education, leading to curricular reform, the end of rules regulating dormitory life, and the admission of more minority students. The escalation of the Vietnam War in 1965 gave the New Left an opportunity to kindle a mass social movement. When the Johnson administration abolished automatic student deferments for the draft in January 1966, more than two hundred new campus chapters of SDS appeared.

In 1966, SDS disrupted ROTC classes, organized draft-card burnings, and harassed campus recruiters for the military and for Dow Chemical Company, the chief producer of napalm and the defoliant Agent Orange,



University of California Berkeley

Jack Weinberg in Surrounded Berkeley Police Car

When the police tried to arrest Weinberg for setting up a table in an area that the Berkeley administration had recently banned from all political activity, several hundred students “sat-in” for thirty-two hours, sparking the Free Speech Movement.

which was used on Vietnam forests. By 1968, it claimed one hundred thousand members and attracted a half-million antiwar protesters to its spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam, remembered for the chants of “Burn cards, not people” (meaning draft cards) and “Hell no, we won’t go!”

Spring 1968 saw at least forty thousand students on one hundred campuses demonstrate against war and racism. Most, but not all, stayed peaceful. In April, militant Columbia University students took over the administration building and held a dean captive. As the protest expanded, a thousand students barricaded themselves inside five campus buildings, declaring them “revolutionary communes.” Galvanized by the brutality of the police who retook the buildings by force, the moderate majority of Columbia students joined a general boycott of classes that shut down the university. Elsewhere, students in Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Mexico expressed their own revolutionary bombast. Their protests far exceeded in size and ferocity anything that occurred in the United States.

The year 1969 saw the high point of the movement with the New Mobilization, a series of huge antiwar demonstrations culminating in mid-November with the March Against Death. Three hundred thousand protestors descended on Washington to march in a candle-lit parade, carrying signs with the names of soldiers killed or villages destroyed in Vietnam. By 1972, antiwar sentiment would be felt nationwide.

Kent State and Jackson State

Although revulsion against the war continued to grow after Richard Nixon assumed office in 1969, his periodic announcements of troop withdrawals from Vietnam brought a lull in campus demonstrations. On April 30, 1970, however, the U.S. invasion of Cambodia jolted a war-weary nation and reawakened student protests.

At Kent State University in Ohio, as elsewhere, antiwar students broke windows and torched the ROTC building. Nixon branded them “bums,” his vice president compared them to Nazi stormtroopers, and the Ohio governor slapped martial law on the university. Three thousand National Guardsmen in full battle gear rolled onto the campus in armored personnel carriers. The next day, as six hundred Kent State students demonstrated, Guardsmen in Troop G, poorly trained in crowd control, fired on students retreating from tear gas, leaving four dead and eleven wounded. None was a campus radical.

Ten days later, Mississippi state patrolmen responding to a campus protest fired into a women’s dormitory at historically black **Jackson State College**, killing two students and wounding a dozen. Nationwide, students exploded in anger against the violence, the war, and the president. More than four hundred colleges and universities, many of which had seen no previous unrest, shut down as students boycotted classes. The war had come home.

The nation was polarized. Most students blamed Nixon for widening the war, yet more Americans blamed the victims for the campus violence and criticized students for undermining U.S. foreign policy. Patriotism, class resentment against privileged college students, and a fear of social chaos underlay the condemnation of protesters. Many Kent townspeople shared the view of a local merchant that the guard had “made only one mistake—they should have fired sooner and longer.” A local ditty promised, “The score is four, and next time more.”

Jackson State College

Campus where two students were shot to death by highway patrolmen



John Fife

“My God, They’re Killing Us”

Following President Nixon’s announcement of the military incursion into Cambodia, a formally neutral nation, many colleges exploded in anger. To quell the protests at Kent State University, where hundreds of students clashed with local police, Ohio National Guardsmen fired on students, killing four. News of the shootings touched off yet another round of campus protests, which led hundreds of colleges to cancel final exams and shut down for the semester.

Legacy of Student Frenzy

The campus disorders after the invasion of Cambodia were the final spasm of a tumultuous, now fragmenting, movement. When a bomb planted by antiwar radicals destroyed a science building at the University of Wisconsin in summer 1970, killing a graduate student, most deplored the tactic. With the resumption of classes in the fall, the fad of “streaking”—racing across campus in the nude, an act more reminiscent of the 1920s than the 1960s—heralded a change in the student mood.

By then, Nixon had significantly reduced the draft calls, decreasing student opposition to the war. Some antiwar activists turned to other causes, or to communes, careers, and parenthood. A handful of radicals went underground, committing terrorist acts that justified the government’s repression of the remnants of the antiwar

movement. The New Left fell victim to government harassment, to its own internal contradictions, and to Nixon's winding down of the Vietnam War.

The consequences of campus upheavals outlived the New Left. Student radicalism spurred the resentment of millions of Americans, helping shatter the liberal consensus. It gave religious evangelicals, southern segregationists, and blue-collar workers yet another reason to vote conservative, and propelled Republicans like Ronald Reagan to prominence. "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with," he declared of militants in 1966. "No more appeasement!" In 1966, Reagan won California's governorship, in part because of his opposition to Berkeley demonstrators.

At the same time, the New Left mobilized campuses and made continued American involvement in Vietnam difficult. The Free Speech Movement also liberalized many facets of campus life and made university governance less authoritarian, virtually ending dress codes and curfews, making ROTC an elective rather than a requirement, and forcing the increased recruitment of minority students and the proliferation of Black Studies programs. Such changes, however, fell short of the New Left vision of remaking society and politics. The generation that the New Left had hoped would be the vanguard of radical change preferred pot to politics, and rock to revolution.

CHECKING IN

- SDS produced a manifesto for change.
- Universities became a major site for protests against social ills and the Vietnam War; the Free Speech Movement, sit-ins, and anti-ROTC demonstrations were some of these protests.
- Polarized reactions to the shooting deaths of students at Kent State University and Jackson State College showed how deeply divided the nation had become.
- The New Left movement dissolved in the early 1970s.
- The youth movement left a mixed legacy, including a conservative backlash that would dominate American politics for the rest of the century.

THE COUNTERCULTURAL REVOLUTION

In what ways did the counterculture shape the 1960s and 1970s?

The alienation and hunger for change that drew some youth to politics led others to cultural rebellion, to personal rather than political change, to discarding middle-class conformity, careerism, and sexual repression. In communes and tribes, these "hippies" denounced individualism and private property; in urban areas like Chicago's Old Town or Atlanta's Fourteenth Street, "places where you could take a trip without a ticket," they experimented with drugs. Calling them a **counterculture**, historian Theodore Roszack defined them as "a culture so radically disaffiliated from the mainstream assumptions of our society that it scarcely looks to many as a culture at all, but takes on the alarming appearance of a barbarian intrusion."

counterculture Youth movement led by hippies; promoted drugs and a lack of social restrictions

Hippies and Drugs

Illustrative of the gap between the two cultures, one saw marijuana as "killer weed," a menace to health and life, and the other thought it a harmless social relaxant. At least half the college students in the late 1960s tried marijuana, and a minority used mind-altering drugs, especially LSD. The high priest of LSD was Timothy Leary, a former Harvard psychologist fired in 1963 for encouraging students to experiment with drugs—to "tune in, turn on, drop out." Many youths, distancing themselves from middle-class respectability, flaunted outrageous personal styles. They showed disdain for consumerism by wearing surplus military clothing, torn jeans, and

tie-dyed T-shirts. Especially galling to adults, young men sported shaggy beards and long hair, the badge of the counterculture.

Musical Revolution

Popular music both echoed and developed a separate generational identity, a distinct youth culture. In the early 1960s, the revived popularity of folk music mirrored youth's search for an "authentic" alternative to what they considered an artificial consumer culture. Bob Dylan sang hopefully of changes "blowin' in the wind"



Michael Ochs Archives/Corbis

The Beatles in England, 1964

Many Americans, disenchanted with conformity and convention, embraced the Fab Four as much for their mod style and frisky personalities as for their music.

that would transform society. Then in 1964, Beatlemania swept the United States. Moving beyond their early romantic songs, the Beatles gloried in the youth culture's drugs ("I'd love to turn you on"), sex ("Why don't we do it in the road?"), and radicalism ("You say you want a revolution"). They would soon be joined by the Rolling Stones, the Motown rhythm-and-blues black performers, and eardrum-shattering acid rockers—each extolling "sex, drugs, and rock and roll" for a generation at war.

In August 1969, four hundred thousand young people gathered for the **Woodstock festival** in New York's Catskill Mountains to celebrate their vision of freedom and harmony. For one long weekend, they reveled in rock music and openly shared drugs and sexual partners. The counterculture heralded Woodstock as the dawning of an era of love and peace—the Age of Aquarius.

In fact, the counterculture was disintegrating. The pilgrimage of "flower children" to San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district and to New York's East Village in the mid-1960s had brought in their wake a train of rapists and organized-crime dope peddlers. A week before the Woodstock festival, hippie Charles Manson and his "family" of runaways ritually murdered a pregnant movie actress and four of her friends in Los Angeles. In December 1969, a Rolling Stones concert at the Altamont Raceway near San Francisco deteriorated into a violent melee in which four concertgoers died. In 1970, the Beatles disbanded. John Lennon sang, "The dream is over."

Nevertheless, the counterculture continued to influence American society long after the 1960s. Advertisers awoke to the economic potential of the youth culture, using "revolution" to sell cars and jeans. Rock groups, commanding huge fees, became big business. Self-fulfillment remained a popular goal, the questioning of conventional values and authority became commonplace, and the repressive sexual standards of the 1950s did not return.

The Sexual Revolution

The counterculture's "if it feels good, do it" approach fit the permissive ethic of the 1960s, leading to a revolution in sexual norms. Although the AIDS epidemic and the graying of the baby boomers in the late 1980s chilled the ardor of promiscuity, liberalized sexual mores were more publicly accepted than ever before, making full gender equality and gay liberation realizable goals.

Many commentators linked the sexual revolution to waning fears of unwanted pregnancy. In 1960, oral contraceptives reached the market, and by 1970, 12 million women were taking "the Pill." Still other women used the intrauterine device (IUD, later banned as unsafe) or the diaphragm. Some states legalized abortion. In New York, one fetus was legally aborted for every two babies born in 1970. The Supreme Court's **Roe v. Wade** (1973) struck down all remaining state laws infringing on a woman's right to abortion during the first three months of pregnancy.

The Court also threw out most laws restricting "sexually explicit" art with "redeeming social importance." Mass culture quickly exploited the new permissiveness. *Playboy* magazine featured ever-more-explicit erotica, and women's periodicals encouraged their readers to enjoy recreational sex. Hollywood filled movie screens

Woodstock festival Outdoor concert in upstate New York that attracted half a million or more young people to celebrate "sex, drugs, and rock and roll"

Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that a woman's right to abortion is constitutionally protected

CHECKING IN

- Hippies denounced materialism and selfishness and created a counterculture on communes and in urban centers like Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco.
- Alienated young people openly experimented with drugs like marijuana and LSD.
- Folk music, the Beatles, and acid rock symbolized the counterculture, culminating in the 1969 festival at Woodstock.
- By 1969, the countercultural movement was deteriorating, although its influence in American culture proved long-lasting.
- The Pill and the legalization of abortion helped launch the sexual revolution that swept from the counterculture into the mainstream.

with scenes of explicit sex, Broadway presented plays featuring frontal nudity and mock orgies, and even television presented frank discussions of once-forbidden subjects.

Attitudinal changes brought behavioral changes, and vice versa. Cohabitation—living together without marriage—became thinkable to average middle-class Americans. Some marital counselors even touted “open marriage” (in which spouses are free to have sex with other partners) and “swinging” (sexual sharing with other couples) as cures for stale relationships. Some Americans’ tolerance for unconventional, unrestrained sexuality had changed dramatically by the mid-1970s.

Overall, the baby boomers transformed sexual relations as much as gender and racial relations. The institutions of marriage and family were fundamentally altered. But what some hailed as liberation others bemoaned as moral decay. Offended by open sexuality and its preferences, as well as “topless” bars and X-rated theaters, many Americans applauded politicians who promised a war on immorality. The public association of the counterculture and the sexual revolution with student radicalism and ghetto riots swelled the tide of conservatism in the 1970s.

FEMINISM AND A VALUES REVOLUTION

What were the major successes and failures of the Women’s Liberation Movement?

The rising tempo of social activism also stirred a new spirit of self-awareness and dissatisfaction among educated women. Although one of the last of the major social movements to emerge in the 1960s, the second wave of feminism outlasted the others and profoundly altered the economic and legal status of women.

A Second Feminist Wave

Several events fanned the embers of discontent into a flame. The 1963 report of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women, established by Kennedy, documented occupational inequities that were comparable to those endured by minorities. Women received less pay than men for comparable work. In addition, they made up only 7 percent of the nation’s doctors and less than 4 percent of its lawyers. The women who served on the presidential commission successfully urged that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibit gender-based as well as racial discrimination in employment.

Dismayed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s reluctance to enforce the ban on sex discrimination in employment, these women formed the **National Organization for Women (NOW)** in 1966. A civil-rights group for women, NOW labored “to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society.” It lobbied for equal opportunity, filed lawsuits against gender discrimination, and mobilized public opinion against sexism.

National Organization for Women (NOW) Leading feminist group

NOW's prominence owed much to the publication of journalist Betty Friedan's (free-DANS) critique of domesticity, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), which posed what Friedan called "the problem that has no name"—the frustration of educated, middle-class wives and mothers who had subordinated their own aspirations to the needs of men. Friedan urged women to pursue careers that would "fulfill their potentialities as human beings."

Still another catalyst for feminism came from the involvement of younger women in the civil-rights and anti-Vietnam War movements. These activists gained confidence in their own potential, an ideology to understand oppression, and experience in the strategy and tactics of organized protest. They also became conscious of their own second-class status, as they were sexually exploited and relegated to menial jobs by male activists. Although small in number, young women who shared such thoughts would soon create a women's liberation movement more critical of sexual inequality than NOW.

Women's Liberation

In 1968, militant feminists adopted "consciousness-raising" as a recruitment device and a means of transforming women's perceptions of themselves and society. Tens of thousands of women assembled in small groups to share their experiences and air grievances. Women learned from such meetings that their individual, personal problems were in fact shared problems with social causes and political solutions—"the personal is political." This new consciousness begot a sense that "sisterhood is powerful." Radical feminists set up "freedom trash cans" into which women could discard high-heeled shoes, bras, girdles, and other symbols of subjugation. They established health collectives and day-care centers and fought negative portrayals of women in the media, in advertising, and in language. Terms like "male chauvinist pig" entered the vocabulary and those like "chicks" exited.

In August 1970, feminists joined the largest women's rights demonstration ever. Commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of woman suffrage, the Women's Strike for Equality brought out tens of thousands of women across the nation to parade for the right to equal employment and to safe, legal abortions. By then the women's movement had already ended newspapers' practice of listing employment opportunities under separate "Male" and "Female" headings, and pressured banks to issue credit to women in their own name.

In the 1970s, feminists focused especially on three issues: equal treatment in education and employment, access to abortion, and passage of the **Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)** barring discrimination on the basis of sex. In 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act prohibited educational institutions that received federal funds from discriminating on the basis of sex. Women won stronger laws on rape and domestic violence. Many single-sex colleges and even military academies became coeducational. The percentage of female students in law schools rose from 5 percent to 40 percent in the 1970s. By century's end, women would constitute about 20 percent of all state and federal legislators.

The right to control their own sexuality became a feminist rallying cry. In addition to using "the Pill," some women challenged demeaning obstetrical practices. And many, aware of the dangers of illegal abortions, pushed for their legalization,

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) A proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution barring discrimination on the basis of sex

achieved in *Roe v. Wade* (1973). *Roe v. Wade* and the subsequent doubling of abortions, to 1.5 million by 1980, triggered an enormous backlash from social conservatives, many of whom felt abortion was the moral equivalent of murder. Abortion opponents sought a “right to life” amendment to the Constitution and simultaneously energized Phyllis Schlafly’s “STOP ERA” campaign.

In 1972, both houses of Congress passed the ERA with little opposition and, within a year, twenty-eight of the necessary thirty-eight states approved the proposed amendment. Its ultimate adoption seemed self-evident. Then Phyllis Schlafly, a Republican organizer and working-woman herself, took up the fight. Her accusation that feminism was just self-centeredness, and her affirmation of traditional gender roles, struck a responsive chord with many men as well as with working-class women who felt estranged from the largely upper-middle-class feminist movement. Schlafly charged that the ERA would force women into combat roles in the military, necessitate “unisex toilets,” and promote lesbianism. Her relentless assault eroded support and helped kill the amendment.

While the number of women working outside the home leaped from under 20 million in 1960 to nearly 60 million by 1990, women’s wages still lagged behind those of men, the workplace remained gender-segregated, and the “glass ceiling” that limited their ability to rise beyond a certain corporate level remained in place. As divorce and out-of-wedlock births became more common, the number of women heading families increased; by 1980, only 15 percent of American families with children had a father who worked and a mother who stayed at home. Sociologists began writing about the “feminization of poverty.”

Women who worked still bore primary responsibility for their homes and family. Yet day-care centers for working women became commonplace, gender-neutral terms (for example, “firefighter” in place of “fireman”) came into vogue, and the ideal male changed from swashbuckler to one more “in touch with his feelings.” Few pined for the era when child care, housework, and volunteerism defined “women’s sphere.”

Gay Liberation

Stimulated by the other protest movements in the 1960s, gay liberation emerged publicly in late June 1969. During a routine raid by New York City police, the homosexual patrons of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in Greenwich Village, unexpectedly fought back. The furor triggered a surge of “gay pride,” a new sense of identity and self-acceptance, and widespread activism. The **gay liberation** movement that emerged asserted, “We are going to be who we are.”

By 1973, eight hundred openly gay groups campaigned for equal rights, for incorporating lesbianism into the women’s movement, and for removing the stigma of immorality and depravity attached to being gay. That year the American Psychiatric Association officially ended its classification of homosexuality as a mental disorder. More and more gay men and women, including some elected officials, “came out of the closet,” proudly acknowledging their sexual orientation. Organizations like the National Gay Task Force, founded in 1973 (and later renamed the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force), demanded the repeal of anti-gay laws and passage of legislation protecting homosexuals’ civil rights. Responding to the pressure, many states and cities repealed laws against same-sex relations between consenting adults.

gay liberation Organized attempt to end discrimination against homosexuals

Like feminism, the gay liberation movement came under attack from conservatives, who feared that protecting gay rights encouraged immoral behavior. In 1977, singer Anita Bryant led a successful campaign to repeal a Miami law banning discrimination against homosexuals, prompting similar antigay campaigns in other cities.

Environmental Activism

Building on the concerns raised in the early 1960s, environmentalists also carried the tide of reform into the 1970s.

Following the first Earth Day in April 1970, which attracted some 20 million participants, the media began to highlight acid rain, global warming, nuclear waste disposal, and other human-caused environmental hazards. Well-publicized disasters greatly furthered concern. Cleveland's Cuyahoga River burst into flames, and Lake Erie "died," both contaminated by decades of toxic chemical dumping.

Environmental advocacy groups gained many fresh recruits. Older organizations such as the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society continued their preservation efforts, while newer groups such as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth rallied against threats to ecological balance. Founded in 1971, Greenpeace worked to preserve old-growth forests and protect the world's oceans. By 2000, it had 250,000 U.S. members. The Save the Whales campaign, launched by the Animal Welfare Institute in 1971, opposed the slaughter of the world's largest mammals.

President Nixon responded to popular pressures by signing bills for cleaner air and water, for reducing toxic wastes, and for the further protection of endangered species and wilderness. Nixon also signed bills creating the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), to enforce health and safety standards in the workplace, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), requiring federal agencies to prepare an environmental-impact analysis of all proposed projects.

Environmentalists also targeted the nuclear-power industry. Adopting techniques from the civil-rights and antiwar campaigns, activists protested at planned nuclear-power plants. The movement crested in 1979 when a partial meltdown crippled the **Three Mile Island** nuclear-power plant in Pennsylvania. A Jane Fonda movie released at the same time, *The China Syndrome*, portrayed a fictional but plausible nuclear-power disaster caused by a California earthquake. The Three Mile Island accident deepened public concerns about nuclear power.

Three Mile Island Nuclear-power plant in Pennsylvania where disaster nearly struck in 1979

However, at a time of concern over an energy crisis, and of rising unemployment, Americans divided over environmental issues like construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline in 1973 and whether or not to abandon offshore oil drilling and restrictions on logging. A popular bumper sticker read: "If You're Hungry and Out of Work, Eat an Environmentalist." Yet other Americans sought a healthy lifestyle that promoted less consumption. Cigarette smoking declined. Organic food consumption increased. A jogging craze swept the middle class.

The "Me Decade"

Whatever political views Americans held, personal pursuits and self-fulfillment largely shaped 1970s American society. Many citizens—reacting to defeat in Vietnam, an

economic downturn, and the corruption of public officials—retreated inward, following the advice of Robert Ringer's best-seller *Looking Out for Number One*.

Highly individualistic pet causes flourished, as did new faiths. Some young people practiced Transcendental Meditation or joined the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. Others embraced the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Several thousand rural communes arose as some counterculture veterans sought to escape the urban-corporate world and live in harmony with nature. However, most communes proved short-lived.

By the early 1980s, journalists discovered the “yuppie” (young urban professional), preoccupied with physical fitness and consumer goods. Yuppies jogged and bicycled, ate pesticide-free natural foods, and, in a process known as gentrification, purchased and restored run-down inner-city apartments, often displacing poor and elderly residents in the process. Self-indulgence appeared to be their hallmark, and many identified with conservatism's priority on, above all, individual rights.

The 1970s also saw the rise of punk rock, an aggressively anti-establishment genre promoted by groups like the Sex Pistols. Tejano music spread from Texas to win national popularity, the improvised recitations of rap or hip-hop emerged from poor black New York City neighborhoods, and disco music spotlighted the desire to dance on one's own and to pursue individual rather than societal goals.

In the cultural arena, much but not all reflected the era's malaise. Along with films featuring the madness of the war in Vietnam and corruption in high places, blockbuster movies like *Jaws* (1975), *Rocky* (1976), and *Star Wars* (1977) offered escapist fare. *Happy Days*, the top TV show of 1976–1977, evoked nostalgia for the 1950s. The TV series *Dallas*, chronicling the steamy affairs of a Texas oil family, captivated millions. And beginning in 1971 and gaining popularity throughout the decade, *All in the Family* featured a blue-collar working stiff, Archie Bunker, raging against “men with hair down to there” as well as just about everything else associated with the 1960s. The character his creator meant to be a cultural and political dinosaur actually forecast a shift to the Right, a backlash against “the sixties.”

- *The Feminine Mystique* energized the women's movement; with the formation of NOW, women's liberation became an important force.
- Feminism advanced, but women still bumped up against the “glass ceiling.”
- Gay liberation efforts achieved results in the repeal of anti-gay laws; like feminism, the gay rights movement sparked a conservative backlash.
- Environmentalism, particularly concerns about nuclear power, expanded.
- After 1970, personal goals trumped political commitments; the “yuppie,” a symbol of the obsession with self-fulfillment, attracted increased attention from the media.

A DIVIDED NATION

How did Richard Nixon's political strategy reflect the racial upheavals and radicalism of this era?

By 1968, the combined stresses and strains in American society had produced the most tumultuous era in the United States since the Civil War. The tensions that year resulted in riots, fiery demonstrations, two stunning assassinations, Lyndon Johnson's retreat in Vietnam and from politics, and an election that marked the demise of liberalism.

Assassinations and Turmoil

On April 4, three days after the Wisconsin primary, Martin Luther King, Jr., was killed in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had gone to support striking sanitation workers.

The assassin was James Earl Ray, a white escaped convict. As the news spread, black ghettos burst into violence in more than a hundred cities. Twenty blocks of Chicago's West Side went up in flames, and Mayor Richard Daley ordered police to shoot to kill arsonists. In Washington, DC, under night skies illuminated by seven hundred fires, army units set up machine-gun emplacements outside the Capitol and White House. The rioting left forty-six dead, three thousand injured, and nearly twenty-seven thousand in jail.

Entering the race as the favorite of the party bosses and labor chieftains, LBJ's vice president, **Hubert Humphrey**, turned the contest for the nomination into a three-cornered scramble. Eugene McCarthy remained the candidate of the "new politics"—a moral crusade against war and injustice directed to affluent, educated liberals. Robert Kennedy campaigned as the tribune of the less privileged, the only candidate who appealed to both white ethnics and the minority poor. But in early June, after his victory in the California primary, the brother of the murdered president was himself assassinated by a troubled Palestinian, Sirhan Sirhan.

The deaths of King and Kennedy frustrated untold Americans. The murders denied them a fundamental democratic right, the right to choose their own leaders.

Hubert Humphrey LBJ's vice president who ran for president against Nixon in 1968



"The Whole World Is Watching"

Photographs and televised pictures of Chicago police beating and gassing antiwar protesters and innocent bystanders at the Democratic convention in 1968 linked Democrats in the public mind with violence and mayhem. The scenes made Republican Richard Nixon a reassuring presence to those he would term "the silent majority."

The dream of peace and racial justice turned to despair. “I won’t vote,” one youth said. “Every good man we get, they kill.”

While Kennedy’s death cleared the way for Humphrey’s nomination, increasing numbers of Democrats turned to third-party candidate George Wallace’s thinly veiled appeal for white supremacy or to the GOP nominee Richard M. Nixon. Nixon promised to end the war in Vietnam with honor, to restore “law and order,” and to heed “the voice of the great majority of Americans, the forgotten Americans, the nonshouters, the non-demonstrators, those who do not break the law, people who pay their taxes and go to work, who send their children to school, who go to their churches, . . . who love this country.” George Wallace tapped into the same wellspring of angry reaction as Nixon. Wallace pitched his message to blue-collar workers and southern whites fed up with antiwar protesters, black militants, hippies, and liberal intellectuals.

In August 1968, violence outside the Democratic National Convention in Chicago reinforced the appeal of both Wallace and Nixon. Determined to avoid the rioting that had wracked Chicago after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Mayor Richard Daley gave police a green light to attack “the hippies, the **Yippies**, and the flippies.” The result was a police riot, televised live to a huge national audience. As protesters chanted, “The whole world is watching,” Chicago police clubbed demonstrators and bystanders alike. The brutality on the streets overshadowed Humphrey’s nomination, tore the Democrats further apart, and created an enduring image of them as the party of dissent and disorder. The real victor in Chicago was conservatism.

Yippies The Youth International Party, a protest group led by counterculture guru Abbie Hoffman

Conservative Resurgence

Nixon capitalized on the televised turmoil to attract the support of voters desperate for “law and order.” He criticized the Supreme Court for safeguarding criminals and radicals, vowed to get people off welfare rolls, promised to crack down on “pot, pornography, protest, and permissiveness,” and asserted that “our schools are for education—not integration.”

Reaching out even more bluntly to working-class whites, George Wallace stoked the fury of the working class against “bearded anarchists, smart-aleck editorial writers, and pointy-headed professors looking down their noses at us.” Promising to keep peace, he vowed that “if any demonstrator ever lays down in front of my car, it’ll be the last car he’ll ever lie down in front of.” Nearly 14 percent of the electorate voted for Wallace in November.

In a narrow outcome with large consequences, Nixon and Humphrey split the rest of the vote almost evenly (see Map 29.1). But with Humphrey receiving just 38 percent of the white vote, the long-dominant New Deal coalition was shattered. The electorate clearly sought stability, not further social change.

The 57 percent of the electorate who chose Nixon or Wallace would dominate American politics for the rest of the century. While the national Democratic Party fractured into a welter of contending groups, the Republicans attracted a new majority who lived in the suburbs and the Sun Belt, regarded the federal government as wasteful, blamed student protestors and hippies for a perceived decline in morality, and objected to special efforts to assist minorities and those on welfare. Wooing these voters became the centerpiece of Nixon’s political strategy.

A Matter of Character

A Californian of Quaker roots, Richard Milhous Nixon was elected to Congress as a navy veteran in 1946. He won prominence for his role in the HUAC investigation of Alger Hiss (see Chapter 26) and advanced to the Senate in 1950 by accusing his Democratic opponent of disloyalty. He served two terms as Eisenhower's vice president, but lost the presidency to Kennedy in 1960 and a run for the California governorship in 1962. Ignoring what seemed a political death sentence, Nixon campaigned vigorously for GOP candidates in 1966 and won his party's nomination and the presidency in 1968.

Nixon yearned to be remembered as an international statesman, but domestic affairs kept intruding. He tried to reform the welfare system and solve complex economic problems, but the underside of Nixon's personality appealed to the darker recesses of national character and intensified the fears and divisions among Americans.

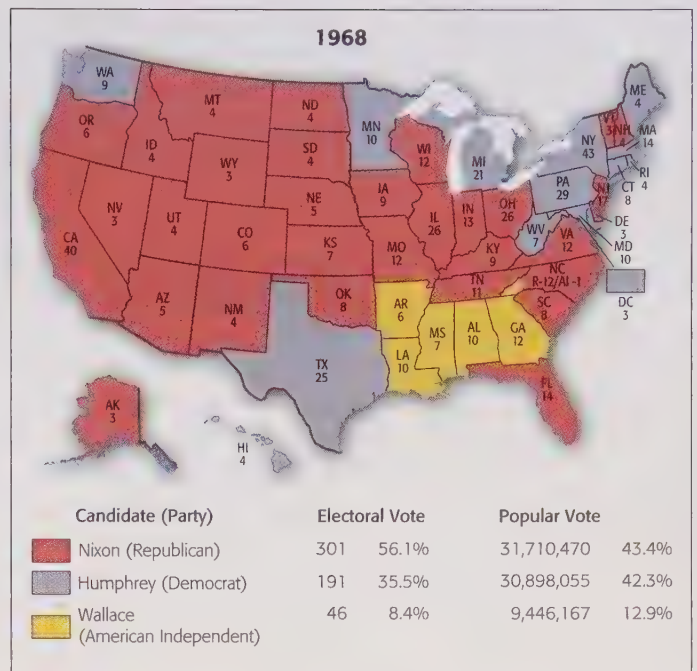
Although highly intelligent, he displayed the rigid self-control of a man monitoring his own every move. When the private Nixon emerged, he was suspicious, insecure, and vengeful. His conviction that enemies lurked everywhere, waiting to destroy him, verged on paranoia. He sought to annihilate his partisan enemies, especially the "eastern liberal establishment" that had long opposed him.

The classic outsider, reared in pinched surroundings, physically awkward, and unable to relate easily to others, Nixon remained fearful, even at the height of his power, that he would never be accepted. At the beginning of his administration, however, his strengths stood out. He spoke of national reconciliation, took bold initiatives internationally, and dealt with domestic problems responsibly.


Symbolic of this positive start, the nation joined the new president in celebrating the first successful manned mission to the moon. On July 21, 1969, astronaut Neil Armstrong descended from the lunar lander *Eagle* to the surface of the Sea of Tranquility, and announced to enthralled television audiences back on Earth, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Five more lunar expeditions followed, but in 1975 the space race essentially ended as the United States and Soviet Union engaged in cooperative efforts to explore the rest of the universe.

The first newly elected president since 1849 whose party controlled neither house of Congress, Nixon cooperated with the Democrats to increase social-security benefits, build subsidized housing, expand the Job Corps, and grant the vote to eighteen-year-olds. As noted earlier, the president also approved new laws to protect the environment and worker safety.

Conservatives grumbled as government grew larger and more intrusive and as race-conscious employment policies, including quotas, were mandated for all federal



Map 29.1 The Election of 1968

 [Interactive Map](#)

contractors. Conservatives grew still angrier when Nixon unveiled the Family Assistance Plan (FAP) in 1969. A bold effort to overhaul the welfare system, FAP proposed a guaranteed minimum annual income for all Americans. Caught between liberals who thought the income inadequate and conservatives who disliked it on principle, FAP died in the Senate.

A Troubled Economy

Nixon inherited the fiscal consequences of Lyndon B. Johnson's effort to wage the Vietnam War and finance the Great Society by deficit financing. Facing a "whopping" budget deficit of \$25 billion in 1969 and an inflation rate of 5 percent, Nixon cut government spending and encouraged the Federal Reserve Board to raise interest rates. The result was a combination of inflation and recession that economists called "stagflation" and Democrats termed "Nixonomics" (Figure 29.1).

Accelerating inflation lowered the standard of living for many families and sparked a wave of strikes as workers sought wage hikes to keep up with the cost of living. It also encouraged the wealthy to invest in art and real estate instead of technology and factories. More plants shut down, industrial jobs dwindled, and millions

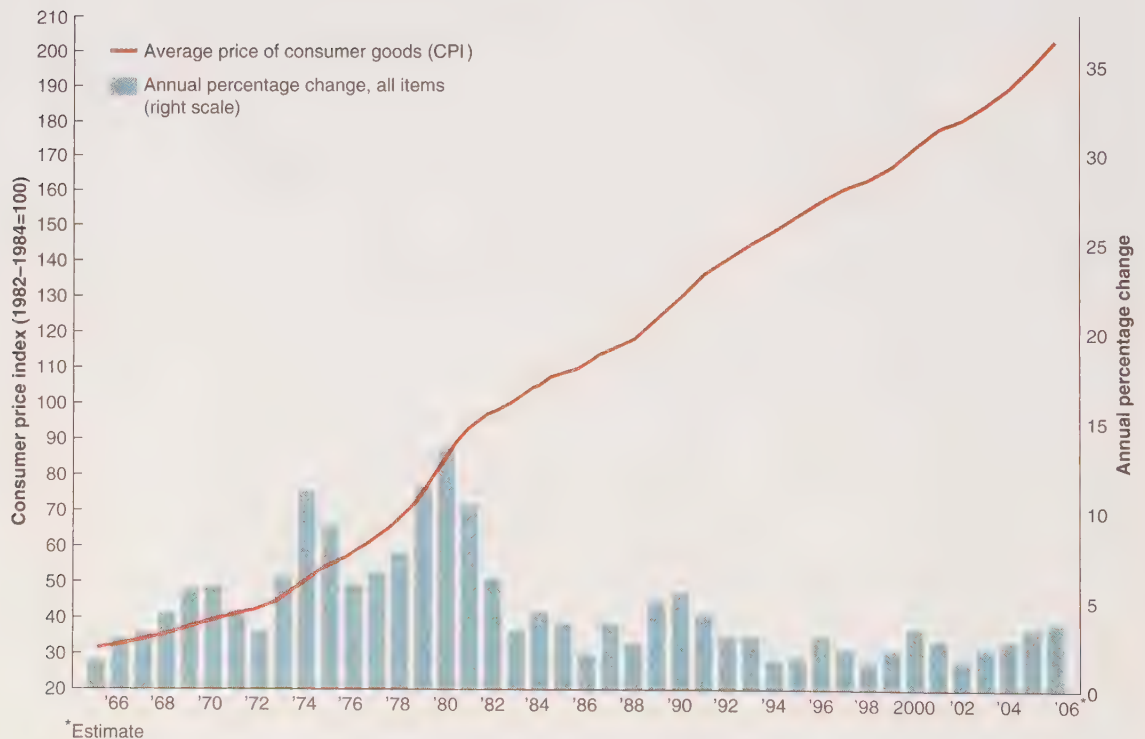


Figure 29.1 Inflation, 1965–2006

Inflation, which had been moderate during the two decades following World War II, began to soar with the escalation of the war in Vietnam in the mid-1960s. In 1979 and 1980, the nation experienced double-digit inflation in two consecutive years for the first time since World War I.

of displaced workers lost their savings, their health and pension benefits, and their homes.

Throughout 1971, Nixon lurched from policy to policy. Declaring, “I am now a Keynesian,” he increased deficit spending to stimulate the private sector. It resulted in the largest budget deficit since World War II. Then, Nixon devalued the dollar to correct the balance-of-payment deficit. Finally, he froze wages, prices, and rents for ninety days, a Band-Aid that worked until after the 1972 election. Then Nixon again reversed course, replacing controls with voluntary—and ineffective—guidelines. Inflation and sluggish growth would dog the U.S. economy throughout the decade.

Law and Order

Despite his public appeals for unity, Nixon hoped to divide the American people in ways that would bring about a realignment in politics and create a new Republican majority coalition. His “southern strategy” sought to attract Dixie’s white Democrats into the GOP fold, while his stands on crime, drugs, antiwar protestors, and black militants wooed blue-collar laborers and suburbanites—voters whom political strategist Kevin Phillips vividly described as “in motion between a Democratic past and a Republican future.”

To combat the militants he despised, Nixon had the IRS audit their tax returns, the Small Business Administration deny them loans, and the National Security Agency illegally wiretap them. The FBI worked with local officials to disrupt and immobilize Black Panthers. The CIA illegally investigated and compiled dossiers on thousands of American citizens. The Department of Justice prosecuted antiwar activists and militant blacks. Nixon himself drew up an “enemies list” of adversaries to be harassed by the government.

In 1970, Nixon widened his offensive against the antiwar movement by approving the Huston Plan, which would use the CIA and FBI in various illegal activities, such as wiretapping and break-ins, to gather or plant evidence. But FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover opposed the Huston Plan as a threat to the bureau’s independence. Blocked, Nixon secretly created his own White House unit to discredit his opposition and to ensure executive security. Nicknamed “the **plumbers**” because of their assignment to plug government leaks, the team was headed by former FBI agent G. Gordon Liddy and former CIA operative E. Howard Hunt.

The plumbers first targeted Daniel Ellsberg, a former Defense Department analyst who had turned over to the press the **Pentagon Papers**, a secret chronicle of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. On June 13, 1971, the *New York Times* began publishing the Pentagon Papers, which revealed a long history of White House lies to foreign leaders, Congress, and the American people. Although the papers contained nothing damaging about his administration, Nixon feared that they would undermine public trust in government and establish a precedent for publishing classified material. The Supreme Court, however, ruled that the publication of the Pentagon Papers was protected under the First Amendment. Livid, Nixon directed the Justice Department to indict Ellsberg for theft and ordered the plumbers to break into the office of Ellsberg’s psychiatrist in search of information against the man who had become an instant hero to the antiwar movement.

plumbers Group set up by Nixon White House to carry out dirty tricks and undermine opposition to the president

Pentagon Papers Secret chronicle of presidential lies regarding U.S. involvement in Vietnam published by the *New York Times*

CHECKING IN

- The presence of antiwar demonstrators at the Democratic National Convention, and the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy, led to riots.
- Richard Nixon and George Wallace stoked and rode the conservative backlash.
- Despite his enormous political skills, Nixon was a deeply flawed man.
- Early in his presidency, Nixon accepted some moderate social and environmental-protection measures; economic “stagflation” led Nixon to attempt a variety of unsuccessful cures.
- Nixon ordered a secret and frequently illegal campaign against his opponents.
- Nixon’s “southern strategy” courted white conservatives by opposing busing and other desegregation measures and promoting law and order.

The Southern Strategy

Nixon especially courted whites upset by the drive for racial equality. The administration opposed extension of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, sought to cripple enforcement of the Fair Housing Act of 1968, pleaded for the postponement of desegregation in Mississippi schools, and filed suits to prohibit busing children to desegregated schools.

The strategy of wooing white southerners dictated Nixon’s Supreme Court nominations. To reverse the Warren Court’s liberalism, he sought strict constructionists, judges who would not “meddle” in social issues or be “soft” on criminals. In 1969, he appointed Warren Burger as chief justice. Although the Senate then twice rejected southern conservatives nominated by Nixon, the president succeeded in appointing Harry Blackmun of Minnesota, Lewis Powell of Virginia, and William Rehnquist of Arizona. Along with Burger, they steered the Court in a centrist direction, ruling liberally in most cases involving abortion, desegregation, and the death penalty, while shifting to the Right on civil liberties, community censorship, and police power.

As the 1970 congressional elections neared, Nixon’s vice president, Spiro T. Agnew, assailed the Democrats as “sniveling hand-wringers” and the news media as “nattering nabobs of negativism.” Liberals deplored Agnew’s alarming alliterative allegations, but many others found them on target. The 1970 elections were a draw, with the GOP losing nine House seats and winning two Senate seats.

SUCCESSES ABROAD, CRISES AT HOME

What were the main causes of the Watergate scandal?

Above all else, Nixon focused on foreign affairs. Considering himself a master of *realpolitik* (**ray-ALL-pol-i-teek**)—a pragmatic approach stressing national interest rather than ethical goals—he sought to check Soviet expansionism and limit the nuclear-arms race. He planned to move the United States out of Vietnam and into an era of *détente*—reduced tensions—with the communist world. To manage diplomacy, Nixon chose **Henry Kissinger**, a refugee from Hitler’s Germany and a professor of international relations, who shared Nixon’s penchant for secrecy and for the concentration of decision-making power in the White House.

In his second inaugural, Nixon pledged to make the next four years “the best four years in American history.” Ironically, they would rank among its sorriest. His vice president would resign in disgrace, his closest confidants would go to jail, and he would serve barely a year and a half of his second term before resigning to avoid impeachment.

Henry Kissinger Harvard professor chosen to be Nixon’s top foreign-policy adviser

détente Effort to reduce tensions between the United States and the communist nations

Détente

Disengagement from Vietnam helped Nixon to achieve a turnabout in Chinese-American relations and **détente** with the communist superpowers. These developments, the most significant shift in U.S. foreign policy since the start of the Cold War, created a new relationship among the United States, China, and the Soviet Union.

Presidents from Truman to Johnson had refused to recognize the People's Republic of China, to allow its admission to the United Nations, and to permit American allies to trade with it. But by 1969, a widening Sino-Soviet split made the prospect of improved relations with both nations attractive to Nixon, who hoped to have "closer relations with each side than they did with each other."

In June 1971, Kissinger began secret negotiations with Beijing, laying the groundwork for Nixon's historic February 1972 trip to China "to seek the normalization of relations." The first visit ever by a sitting American president to the largest nation in the world, it ended more than twenty years of Chinese-American hostility. Full diplomatic recognition followed in 1979.

Equally significant, Nixon went to Moscow in May 1972 to sign agreements with the Soviets on trade and technological cooperation. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT I) froze each side's offensive nuclear missiles for five years and committed both superpowers to strategic equality rather than nuclear superiority. Although it did not end the arms race, SALT I moved both countries toward "peaceful coexistence" and, in an election year, enhanced Nixon's stature.

Shuttle Diplomacy

However, not even better relations with China and the Soviet Union ensured global stability. In the Middle East, Israel, fearing that a massive Arab attack was imminent, launched a preemptive strike on its Arab neighbors in 1967, routing them in six days. Israel occupied the Egyptian-controlled Sinai (**SIE-nie**) and Gaza (**GAH-zuh**) Strip, the Jordanian-ruled West Bank and East Jerusalem, and Syria's Golan (**go-LAHN**) Heights. Israel promised to give up most of the occupied lands in exchange for a negotiated peace, but the Arab states refused to negotiate with Israel or to recognize its right to exist. Palestinians, many of them refugees, turned to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which called for Israel's destruction.

War exploded again in 1973 when Egypt and Syria attacked Israel on the Jewish high holy day of Yom Kippur (**yawm kip-POOR**). Only massive shipments of military supplies from the United States enabled a reeling Israel to stop the assault. In retaliation, the Arab states embargoed shipments of crude oil to the United States and its allies. As the five-month embargo and following spike in oil prices sharply intensified inflation, it dramatized U.S. dependence on foreign energy sources.

The dual shocks of the energy crisis at home and renewed Soviet influence among Arab hardliners spurred Nixon and Kissinger to pursue "shuttle diplomacy." Flying from one Middle East capital to another for two years, Kissinger negotiated a cease-fire, pressed Israel to cede additional captured Arab territory, and persuaded the Arabs to end the oil embargo. Although shuttle diplomacy left the Palestinian issue still festering, it successfully excluded the Soviets from a major role in Middle Eastern affairs.

Nixon-Kissinger *realpolitik* based American aid on a nation's willingness to oppose the Soviet Union, not on the nature of its government. Thus, the Nixon administration liberally supplied arms to the shah of Iran, to President Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, and to the white supremacist regime of South Africa, as well as to antidemocratic regimes in Brazil and South Korea and to Portuguese colonial authorities in Angola.

When Chileans elected a Marxist, Salvador Allende (*ah-YEN-day*), president in 1970, the CIA secretly funded opponents of the leftist regime. The United States also cut off economic aid to Chile. In 1973, a military junta overthrew the Chilean government and killed Allende. Nixon quickly recognized the dictatorship, and economic aid and investment again flowed to Chile.

The Election of 1972

Nixon's reelection appeared certain. He counted on his diplomatic successes and his winding down of the Vietnam War to win over moderate voters. He also expected his southern strategy and law-and-order posture to attract Wallace voters. Continuing Democratic divisions boosted Nixon's optimism. His only major worry, another third-party candidacy by George Wallace, vanished on May 15, 1972, when Wallace was shot during a campaign stop and paralyzed from the waist down. He withdrew from the race, leaving Nixon a monopoly on the white backlash.

The Senate's most outspoken dove, **George McGovern** of South Dakota, capitalizing on the antiwar sentiment, blitzed the Democratic primaries and won the nomination on the first ballot. Perceptions of McGovern as inept and radical drove away all but the most committed supporters. McGovern dropped his vice-presidential running mate, Thomas Eagleton, when it became known that Eagleton had received electric-shock therapy for depression. Subsequently, several prominent Democrats publicly declined to run with him. McGovern's endorsement of decriminalization of marijuana, immediate withdrawal from Vietnam, and pardons for those who had fled the United States to avoid the draft exposed him to GOP ridicule as the candidate of the radical fringe.

Remembering his narrow loss to Kennedy in 1960 and too-slim victory in 1968, however, Nixon left no stone unturned. To do whatever was necessary to win, he appointed his attorney general, John Mitchell, to head the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP). Millions in contributions financed a series of "dirty tricks" against Democrats and paid for a special espionage unit, led by Liddy and Hunt, to spy on the opposition. In June 1972, it received Mitchell's approval to wiretap telephones at the Democratic National Committee headquarters in Washington's Watergate complex. A security guard foiled the break-in. Arrested were James McCord, the security coordinator of CREEP, and several other Liddy and Hunt associates.

A White House cover-up began immediately. Nixon announced that "no one in this administration, presently employed, was involved in this bizarre incident." Nixon coached associates on what they should tell investigators, authorized the payment of hush money and hints of a presidential pardon to buy the silence of those arrested, and directed the CIA to halt the FBI's investigation on the pretext that it would damage national security.

With the McGovern campaign a shambles and Watergate seemingly contained, Nixon won the election overwhelmingly, amassing nearly 61 percent of the popular vote and 520 electoral votes. Strongly supported only by minorities and low-income voters, McGovern carried just Massachusetts and the District of Columbia. The election solidified the 1968 realignment.

George McGovern Liberal senator from South Dakota and Democratic candidate for president in 1972

The Watergate Upheaval

The scheme to conceal links between the White House and the accused Watergate burglars had succeeded during the 1972 campaign. But after the election, federal judge John Sirica (sir-RICK-uh) refused to accept the defendants' claim that they had acted on their own. Threatening severe prison sentences, Sirica coerced James McCord of CREEP into confessing that highly placed White House aides knew in advance of the break-in and that the defendants had committed perjury during the trial. Two *Washington Post* reporters, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, following clues furnished by "Deep Throat," an unnamed informant, wrote a succession of front-page stories tying the break-in to illegal contributions and "dirty tricks" by CREEP.

In February 1973, the Senate established the Special Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities to investigate, and one stunning revelation after another poured forth. The hearings revealed the existence of a White House "enemies list," the president's use of government agencies to harass opponents, and administration favoritism in return for illegal campaign donations. Both the president's special counsel and the acting head of the FBI testified to the White House's involvement in the Watergate break-in, forcing Nixon to announce the resignation of his principal aides and the appointment of a special Watergate prosecutor with broad powers of investigation and subpoena. Then the most dramatic bombshell, the disclosure that Nixon taped every conversation in the Oval Office, meant there was an incontrovertible record of "what the president knew and when he knew it."

When the special prosecutor insisted on access to the tapes, Nixon ordered the attorney general to fire him. The attorney general and the number two man in the Justice Department refused and were dismissed in what became known as the "Saturday night massacre." More than 150,000 telegrams poured into the White House, and eighty-four members of Congress sponsored sixteen different bills of impeachment. The House Judiciary Committee began impeachment proceedings, and Congress went to the Supreme Court to demand access to the original tapes.

Adding to Nixon's woes, Vice President Agnew pleaded no contest to charges of income tax evasion and solicitation of bribes, both as governor of Maryland and as vice president. Agnew left office in October 1973 with a fine and suspended sentence, and was replaced, under provisions of the Twenty-fifth Amendment, by House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford of Michigan.

A President Disgraced

In late July 1974, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously in *United States v. Nixon* that the unedited tapes must be turned over to Congress, and the House Judiciary Committee adopted three articles of impeachment. They charged Nixon with obstruction of justice, abusing the powers of the presidency, and contempt of Congress. Checkmated, Nixon surrendered the subpoenaed tapes.

The tapes produced the "smoking gun" proving that Nixon had ordered the cover-up, obstructed justice by hindering the criminal

CHECKING IN

- Nixon and Kissinger considered themselves masters of *realpolitik*, stressing national interest rather than ethical goals.
- Nixon pursued détente and normalized relations with China.
- Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy guaranteed the United States a preeminent role in the Middle East and helped ease some Israeli-Arab tensions.
- Nixon's reelection strategy involved many "dirty tricks," including breaking into Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate building to bug telephones.
- A series of House and Senate hearings revealed the extent of illegal activities and the involvement of the president and his chief aides.
- The Supreme Court ruled that Nixon must release taped conversations that incriminated him in the cover-up; rather than be impeached, Nixon resigned the presidency in August 1974.

investigation of the break-in, and lied about his role for more than two years. The revelations confirmed many Americans' distrust of government and cynicism about politics, hastening their disengagement from public affairs.

In trying to explain Watergate, some historians point to the increasing expansion of presidential power, "the imperial presidency," stretching back several decades. Others argue that Nixon simply got caught and that his liberal foes forced him to pay a higher price for his misdeeds than had other presidents. Most focus on Nixon's obsession to destroy his hated adversaries. Whatever the cause, Nixon became the first president to resign—and Gerald Ford took office as the nation's first chief executive who had not been elected either president or vice president.

A TROUBLED NATION AND PRESIDENCY

What were the major failures of the Ford and Carter presidencies?

In the aftermath of the Vietnam failure and Richard Nixon's disgrace, Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter grappled with inflation, recession, and industrial stagnation as well as humiliations abroad and, for Carter, a maddening hostage crisis. The confident 1950s and early 1960s, when prosperous America had savored its role as the Free World's leader, now seemed remote, even foolhardy. The nation now confronted sobering new realities—particularly significant foreign competition and an energy crisis—beyond its control.

Panic at the Pump

In 1973–1974, Americans sat in their cars and waited in long lines to buy gasoline at skyrocketing prices. Angry and frustrated, motorists fought each other and battled with police. At one service station with no gas to sell, a driver threatened the attendant, "You are going to give me gas or I will kill you."

The nation had long taken cheap, abundant energy for granted, yet remained heavily dependent on the third of its oil it imported. This vulnerability became apparent when Arab nations, angered by Nixon's support of Israel during the 1973 war, cut off the supply of oil to the West. Then the seven Arab members of the **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)**, a consortium of oil-producing states formed in 1960, quadrupled the cost of a barrel of oil from \$3 to \$12 in 1976. OPEC would almost triple it again, to \$34 in 1979, pushing the price of a gallon of gas over \$1 for the first time. Overall inflation soared to 14 percent, turning hard-pressed taxpayers against the welfare programs adopted during past Democratic administrations.

Millions of Americans in the 1970s were forced—as one magazine phrased it—to "Learn to Live with Less." Unemployment ranged between 6 and 10 percent, nearly twice the usual postwar level, and the federal deficit soared from \$8.7 billion in 1970 to \$72.7 billion in 1980. Moreover, the U.S. posted its first trade deficit—importing more than it exported—in almost a century.

Most acutely, higher costs and greater foreign competition ravaged the manufacturing regions of the Midwest and Northeast, soon to be called the "Rust Belt."

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

Oil-exporting nations whose embargo caused fuel prices to spike in 1973 and 1979



AP Photo

The Energy Crisis

The Arab embargo on oil shipments to the United States, begun in 1973, revealed America's dependence on Middle Eastern oil reserves and the end of its unchallenged economic dominance in the world. Dramatic increases in heating oil and gas prices underlined the extent to which Americans no longer could shape their economic future alone.

The automobile industry was especially hard hit by soaring gasoline prices that boosted sales of more fuel-efficient foreign imports, mainly from Japan. Chrysler nearly declared bankruptcy. The Big Three carmakers eliminated the jobs of one in three autoworkers between 1978 and 1982.

Several factors contributed to industrial decline in the United States: aging machinery, inefficient production methods, complacent management, and fierce competition from foreign companies paying lower wages, especially in the countries of the Pacific Rim. American-based manufacturers moved their high-wage jobs overseas. In one five-year period (1979–1983), 11.5 million U.S. workers lost jobs because of plant closings and cutbacks.

With the loss of industrial jobs, the union movement weakened. In 1960, 31 percent of U.S. workers belonged to unions; thirty years later, that figure had been virtually halved to 16 percent, with further declines ahead. However, some workers did join unions in these years, mainly teachers, public employees, and service workers,

many of whom were female. A union official lamented “a nation of hamburger stands . . . a country stripped of industrial capacity and meaningful work . . . a service economy.”

Gerald Ford Thirty-eighth president of the United States; his one term in office was overshadowed by his pardon of Nixon and an economic recession

Gerald Ford, Caretaker

Former Michigan congressman **Gerald Ford** became vice president after Agnew resigned in disgrace, and then president after Nixon resigned to avoid impeachment. Conveying a likable decency and acknowledging he was “a Ford not a Lincoln,” he urged Americans to move beyond the “long national nightmare” of Watergate. But the honeymoon quickly ended as many Americans reacted with outrage when Ford pardoned Nixon for “any and all crimes” committed while in office.

Economic problems, particularly inflation, dogged Ford’s presidency. In October 1974, Ford unveiled a program of voluntary price restraint dubbed “Whip Inflation Now” (WIN), but prices continued upward. When the Federal Reserve Board tried to cool the economy by raising interest rates, a severe recession resulted. Unemployment approached 11 percent by 1975, more than twice the post-war average. Americans for the first time since World War II struggled to curb energy consumption. Congress set fuel-efficiency standards for automobiles in 1975 and imposed a national speed limit of fifty-five miles per hour.

National morale sank further in April 1975 when the South Vietnamese government fell, ending two decades of U.S. effort in Vietnam. The TV networks chronicled desperate helicopter evacuations from the U.S. embassy in Saigon (soon renamed Ho Chi Minh City). A few weeks later, Cambodia seized a U.S. merchant ship, the *Mayagüez*. A military rescue ordered by Ford freed the thirty-nine *Mayagüez* crew members but cost the lives of forty-one U.S. servicemen. As the nation entered the election year 1976—also the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence—Americans found little reason for optimism.

Jimmy Carter Thirty-ninth president of the United States; his one-term presidency identified key issues but was plagued by multiple problems

Jimmy Carter, Outsider

Gerald Ford won the 1976 Republican nomination. **Jimmy Carter**, a Georgia peanut grower and former governor, swept the Democratic primaries by stressing themes that appealed to post-Watergate America: his honesty, his status as a Washington outsider, and his Christian faith.

Carter won by a narrow margin. The vote broke along class lines: the well-to-do went for Ford; the poor, overwhelmingly for Carter. Despite the rising conservative tide, popular revulsion against Nixon and Watergate temporarily interrupted the Republican advance. In office, Carter rejected the trappings of Nixon’s “imperial presidency.” On inauguration day, he walked from the Capitol to the White House. In an echo of Roosevelt’s fireside radio chats, he delivered some TV speeches wearing a sweater and seated by a fireplace.

Despite the populist symbolism, Carter never shaped a clearly liberal agenda. At heart a fiscal conservative, he favored cutting federal spending. “Government cannot solve our problems,” he asserted in his second State of the Union address. Carter further disappointed liberals by beginning deregulation—the removal of government

controls on the airline, railroad, and trucking industries, as well as on oil and natural gas prices—and by failing to adopt an effective energy policy.

Carter confronted an environmental crisis in Niagara Falls, New York. In a district called Love Canal, schools, homes, and apartments had been built on the site of a former chemical dump. In the 1970s, when residents complained of odors and strange substances oozing from the soil, tests confirmed that toxic chemicals were seeping into basements and polluting the air and water. Medical researchers found elevated levels of cancer, miscarriages, and birth defects among Love Canal residents.

In 1978, President Carter authorized federal funds to relocate Love Canal families. In late 1980, as his term ended, Carter signed legislation creating a federal “Superfund” to clean up the nation’s most polluted industrial sites. Carter also signed the Alaska Lands Act, which set aside more than 100 million acres of public land for parks, wildlife refuges, and national forests. These two bills proved to be Carter’s rare successes. As a consequence of his own ineptness and the sharp conservative turn in the political climate, Carter, groused one legislator, “couldn’t get the Pledge of Allegiance through Congress.”

Carter’s foreign-policy record proved only somewhat better. As a candidate, he had urged more emphasis on protecting human rights worldwide, in contrast to Henry Kissinger’s dominant focus on U.S. national interests. His secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, worked to combat human rights abuses by some, but not all, American allies who committed them, and Carter did raise public awareness of human rights issues. In Latin America, the president completed negotiations on treaties transferring the Canal Zone to Panama by 2000. In a rare success for Carter, the Senate ratified the treaties.

Toward the Soviet Union, Carter first showed conciliation, but toughness ultimately won out. In 1979, Carter and the Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev signed a new Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II), limiting each side’s nuclear arsenals. But the treaty failed in the Senate when, in late December 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Many Americans saw the invasion as proof of Moscow’s expansionist designs. Carter revived registration for the military draft, boycotted the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, and embargoed grain shipments to Russia.

The Middle East and Iran

Carter’s proudest achievement and his most bitter setback both came in the Middle East. In September 1978, he hosted Egyptian leader Anwar el-Sadat (**AN-wahr el-sah-DAHT**) and Israeli leader Menachem Begin (**meh-NAKH-em BAY-gin**) at Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland, where they agreed on a peace framework. The resulting **Camp David Accords** led to Israel’s withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, captured in the 1967 war; for its part, Egypt recognized Israel as a nation, the first Arab country to do so.

Carter’s efforts for a broader Middle Eastern peace ultimately failed, however. The other Arab states rejected the Camp David Accords and Islamic fundamentalists assassinated Sadat in 1981. Peace remained elusive as ever.

More immediately unsuccessful was Carter’s policy toward Iran. Protests against the repressive regime headed by the shah of Iran, a longtime American client and ally, swelled throughout 1978. Iran’s Shiite Muslims, inspired by their exiled spiritual

Camp David Accords

Agreement brokered by Jimmy Carter that started a peace process in the Middle East

head, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (*eye-uh-TOLL-uh roo-HOLL-ah ho-MAY-nee*), overthrew the shah's government early in 1979. The shah fled Iran and Khomeini returned in triumph, imposing strict Islamic rule.

On November 4, 1979, after Carter admitted the shah to the United States for cancer treatment, Khomeini supporters stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran and seized sixty-six American hostages. Thus began a 444-day ordeal that virtually paralyzed the Carter administration. Night after night, TV images of blindfolded hostages, anti-American mobs, and U.S. flags being burned rubbed American nerves raw. A botched rescue attempt in April 1980, in which several U.S. helicopters malfunctioned and eight GIs died, added to the nation's humiliation. Not until January 20, 1981, the day Ronald Reagan took office as the new president, did the Iranian authorities release the hostages.

Americans turned against the remote figure in the White House. When Carter's approval rating sagged to 26 percent in mid-1979 (lower than Nixon's when he resigned as a result of Watergate), he retreated to Camp David and emerged to deliver a televised address that blamed the American people's "crisis of confidence" for leading them to doubt the meaning of their own lives, the future, and the nation's purpose and abilities. But most Americans thought the helpless Carter was the problem. The 1980 Democratic convention glumly re-nominated Carter, but defeat in November loomed. A successful post-presidential career of public service would do much to restore Carter's reputation and bring him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002. But in 1980, most Americans hungered for a new president and changed policies.

CHECKING IN

- The Ford administration struggled with continued inflation, an oil crisis, and the collapse of South Vietnam.
- Carter was elected as an outsider but found it impossible to govern that way.
- The Carter administration enjoyed few domestic successes but several foreign-policy achievements.
- Carter's greatest achievement came with the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel, although subsequent problems overshadowed this accomplishment.
- The Iran hostage crisis undermined and ultimately destroyed Carter's presidency.

Chapter Summary

What were the major landmarks of the youth movement? (page 712)

Campus-based activist groups like SDS and the Free Speech Movement sought a more humane democracy, a less racist and materialistic society, and an end to the war in Vietnam. The New Left movement culminated in a series of mass rallies in 1969. It dissipated after Nixon began to wind down the Vietnam War, and also after the shooting deaths of students at Kent State and Jackson State in 1970. The movement sparked a conservative backlash.

In what ways did the counterculture shape the 1960s and 1970s? (page 717)

The dissatisfaction with the status quo that engendered protest pushed some young people into cultural rebellion. Denouncing materialism and middle-class conventions, hippies "turned on and dropped out," seeking fulfillment in sex, drugs, and rock and roll. Woodstock represented the high point of the counterculture, which declined thereafter, victim to its own excesses and commercial exploitation. The counterculture left behind freer social and sexual norms.

KEY TERMS

Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) (p. 713)

Berkeley Free Speech Movement (FSM) (p. 714)

Jackson State College (p. 715)
counterculture (p. 717)

Woodstock festival (p. 719)

Roe v. Wade (p. 719)

National Organization for Women (NOW) (p. 720)

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) (p. 721)

gay liberation (p. 722)

Three Mile Island (p. 723)

What were the major successes and failures of the Women's Liberation Movement? (page 720)

Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* reinvigorated the feminist movement. Feminists ended some discriminatory hiring practices and made gains in education; the *Roe v. Wade* decision protected access to abortion. However, conservatives defeated the Equal Rights Amendment. Gay liberation advocates organized and won passage of some laws protecting homosexuals' civil rights. Environmental advocacy groups won key victories protecting endangered species and for clean air and water. Despite these reforms, most Americans turned away from politics and instead pursued highly individualistic means of self-fulfillment.

How did Richard Nixon's political strategy reflect the racial upheavals and radicalism of this era? (page 724)

The assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy in 1968 led to more riots. Richard Nixon and George Wallace capitalized on the resulting conservative backlash, positioning themselves as defenders of law and order and courting white southern conservatives by opposing school busing and other desegregation measures. Nixon was politically skilled, deeply flawed, and convinced that he was surrounded by enemies. He endorsed secret campaigns against his opposition, using the FBI, IRS, CIA, and a shadowy group called "the plumbers."

What were the main causes of the Watergate scandal? (page 730)

During his first term, President Nixon pursued moderate domestic policies while beginning the pullout from Vietnam, normalizing relations with China, enlarging détente with the Soviet Union, and attempting to mediate Middle Eastern politics. Nixon's administration used a variety of "dirty tricks" to attack enemies and win reelection in 1972, resulting most notoriously in the Watergate scandal. Investigative reporters uncovered the extent of illegality, and House and Senate committees revealed how deeply the president and his closest aides were involved. Ultimately, Nixon resigned the presidency rather than be impeached.

What were the major failures of the Ford and Carter presidencies? (page 734)

Neither administration was able to contain inflation, made worse by the OPEC-created oil crisis in 1973. High unemployment and the loss of industrial jobs undermined the unions. The Carter administration did enjoy some foreign-policy successes, notably the Camp David Accords that the president brokered between Egypt and Israel. However, a continuing recession, legislative ineptitude, and, finally, the Iran hostage crisis gravely weakened the Carter administration.

KEY TERMS continued

Hubert Humphrey (p. 725)

Yippies (p. 726)

plumbers (p. 729)

Pentagon Papers (p. 729)

Henry Kissinger (p. 730)

détente (p. 730)

George McGovern (p. 732)

Organization of Petroleum
Exporting Countries (OPEC)
(p. 734)

Gerald Ford (p. 736)

Jimmy Carter (p. 736)

Camp David Accords (p. 737)



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tools and review materials—including audio
and video clips—for this chapter.

A Conservative Revival and the End of the Cold War

CHAPTER 30

1980–2000

CHAPTER PREVIEW

A Conservative Shift in American Culture and Politics

What core beliefs guided Ronald Reagan's presidency?

Domestic Drift and a New World Order

What were George H. W. Bush's principal achievements and failures as president?

Domestic and Global Issues at Century's End

What policy issues, political events, and economic trends most influenced Bill Clinton's presidency?

Moderation, White House Scandal, and a Disputed Election, 1996–2000

Why did political differences become sharper from 1996 to 2000?

Economic and Cultural Trends at Century's End

What economic trends, technological innovations, and cultural trends shaped American life in the 1990s?

Of all the physical reminders of the Cold War, the most notorious was the Berlin Wall, built by the Russians in 1961. Snaking around the city, this concrete and barbed-wire barrier with its watchtowers and armed guards stood as a stark emblem of Cold War divisions. Over the years, nearly two hundred people had been shot trying to escape across the Wall.

On October 18, 1989, East Germany's communist regime collapsed. When East Berliners rushed to the Wall, guards opened the gates. As people joyously poured through, West Berliners greeted them with flowers, tears, and shouts of welcome. Giddy young



President Ronald Reagan and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow, 1988

people danced on the Wall itself. By November, the wall had practically disappeared. A hated Cold War symbol had faded into history.

The Cold War's end looms large in this chapter. We begin, however, by continuing the story of the post-1960s conservative shift in American politics, which culminated in Ronald Reagan's election as president in 1980. We then examine U.S. politics and foreign affairs during Reagan's presidency, as free-market ideology and a fierce anticommunism shaped policies at home and abroad.

Soon after Reagan left office, Americans welcomed the Soviet Union's collapse. But dangers remained. While U.S. leaders struggled with post-Cold War disorders, an immediate crisis arose in the Middle East as Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded oil-rich Kuwait, forcing Reagan's successor, President George Bush, to respond.

When Bill Clinton replaced George Bush in the White House in 1993, domestic issues took center stage, although events in the Balkans (**BALL-kuns**), the Middle East, and elsewhere demanded attention as well. As his term ended in scandal and impeachment, the Supreme Court intervened to resolve the disputed 2000 presidential election. Ostentatious consumption, undercurrents of violence, and deep cultural conflicts shaped American life as the century ended.

A CONSERVATIVE SHIFT IN AMERICAN CULTURE AND POLITICS

What core beliefs guided Ronald Reagan's presidency?

Ronald Reagan won the presidency in 1980 riding the conservative tide that had been building for years. Domestically, Reagan and his congressional allies enacted tax cuts and deregulatory measures reflecting their free-market, small-government ideology. The Reagan era began with a recession and ended with a stock-market crash. In between, though, inflation eased and the overall economy improved. Reagan's economic policies produced mounting federal deficits, however, while economic inequities, inner-city problems, and stubborn unemployment persisted.

An avid Cold Warrior, Reagan boosted military spending and adopted a tough stance toward Russia. He also faced crises in the Middle East. The administration's secretive efforts to overthrow a leftist regime in Latin America triggered a constitutional crisis in Reagan's second term. However, a dramatic easing of Cold War tensions ended his presidency on a high note.

Conservative Cultural Trends in the 1970s

The 1960s was a polarizing decade. Many Americans deplored what they viewed as the decade's radical excesses. As we saw in Chapter 29, Richard Nixon exploited this disaffection to win the White House in 1968.

Even earlier, **William F. Buckley** had launched the conservative *National Review* magazine (1955) and founded Young Americans for Freedom (1960). Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign, though unsuccessful, gave evidence of conservatism's latent strength. In local communities, especially in the fast-growing

William F. Buckley Author, editor, and commentator who helped shape the modern conservative movement



Chronology

1980	Ronald Reagan elected president
1981	Major cuts in taxes and domestic spending; large increases in military budget
1982	Equal Rights Amendment dies; CIA funds contra war against Nicaragua's Sandinistas; Central Park rally for nuclear weapons freeze
1983	239 U.S. marines die in Beirut terrorist attack; Reagan proposes Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars); U.S. invasion of Grenada
1984	Reagan defeats Walter Mondale to win second presidential term
1984–1986	Congress bars military aid to contras
1985	Rash of airline hijackings and other terrorist acts
1986	Congress passes South African sanctions; Immigration Reform and Control Act
1987	Congressional hearings on Iran-contra scandal; Stock-market crash
1988	Reagan trip to Moscow; George H. W. Bush elected president
1989	Massive Alaskan oil spill by <i>Exxon Valdez</i> ; China's rulers crush prodemocracy movement; Berlin Wall is torn down
1990	Federal Clean Air Act strengthened; Americans with Disabilities Act passed; Iraq invades Kuwait; Recession (1990–1993); Germany reunified; Soviet troops start withdrawal from Eastern Europe
1991	Persian Gulf War; hearings on Clarence Thomas's Supreme Court nomination; collapse of Soviet Union
1992	<i>Planned Parenthood v. Casey</i> decision approves abortion restrictions; President Bush commits U.S. troops in Somalia; Bill Clinton elected president
1993	Congress approves NAFTA treaty; Clinton health-care reform plan fails (1993–1994); deaths of Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas; World Trade Center bombing kills six
1994	Christian Coalition makes gains; Yasir Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin sign Oslo Accords; Clinton withdraws U.S. forces from Somalia; United States joins the World Trade Organization (WTO); Republicans proclaim "Contract with America" and win control of the House and Senate; Newt Gingrich becomes Speaker of the House
1995	Oklahoma City federal building bombed; Dayton Accords achieve cease-fire in Bosnia; Clinton commits U.S. troops to enforce agreement
1996	Welfare Reform Act; Clinton wins second presidential term
1997	Congressional battle over tobacco industry regulation
1998	Clinton impeached by House of Representatives in sex scandal
1999	Senate dismisses impeachment charges; Columbine High School shootings; U.S. and NATO forces intervene in Kosovo
2000	George W. Bush wins presidency when Supreme Court ends Florida election dispute

South and West, conservatives came together and mobilized politically. Think tanks like the Heritage Foundation helped conservatives solidify their ideology.

Southern California's Orange County vividly illustrates this process. Orange County conservatives—mostly upwardly mobile white evangelical Protestants—were intensely anticommunist, dismayed by 1960s' radicals, and suspicious of the "liberal elites" dominating the media and national politics. Foreshadowing changes ahead nationally, Orange County helped elect Ronald Reagan governor of California in

1966 and in 1978 rallied behind Proposition 13, a state referendum mandating deep cuts in property taxes.

Conservatives mobilized around specific issues, especially abortion. As noted in Chapter 29, in the wake of *Roe v. Wade*, “right to life” activists pressed for a constitutional amendment outlawing abortion. Led by Roman Catholic and conservative Protestant activists, “pro-life” advocates rallied, signed petitions, and picketed abortion clinics and pregnancy-counseling centers.

Responding to the pressure, Congress in 1976 ended Medicaid funding for most abortions. Handing conservatives another victory, President Nixon in 1972 vetoed a bill setting up a national network of day-care centers, criticizing its “communal approach to child-rearing.” The Equal Rights Amendment, denounced by Phyllis Schlafly and other conservatives, died in 1982—three states short of ratification.

To conservatives, gay and lesbian activism foretold society’s moral collapse. “God . . . destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of this terrible sin,” thundered TV evangelist Jerry Falwell. In 1977, singer Anita Bryant led a successful campaign against a Miami ordinance protecting homosexuals’ civil rights. Soon after, *Good Housekeeping* magazine readers voted Bryant “the most admired woman in America.” Other cities, too, reversed earlier measures protecting gay rights.

In 1978, as the backlash intensified, a member of the San Francisco board of supervisors fatally shot gay activist and board-member Harvey Milk and Milk’s political ally, Mayor George Moscone. When the killer received a light sentence, riots erupted in the city.

The conservative movement also gained strength from the rapid growth of evangelical Protestantism, with its emphasis on strict morality, biblical authority, and a “born again” conversion experience. Evangelical denominations such as the Assemblies of God and the Southern Baptist Convention grew explosively in the 1970s and 1980s, as did independent suburban megachurches. Meanwhile, liberal denominations lost members.

Modern-day evangelicals preached reform, but of a conservative variety. Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority, founded in 1979 as a “pro-life, pro-family, pro-moral, and pro-America” crusade, supported conservative candidates. So did Pat Robertson, founder of the Christian Broadcasting Network. Tim LaHaye of San Diego, another leading evangelical preacher, was also active in mobilizing grass-roots support for conservative causes.

While battling abortion, homosexuality, and pornography, often in alliance with conservative Catholics, evangelicals also attacked the Supreme Court’s 1962 *Engel v. Vitale* decision banning organized prayer in public schools as a violation of the First Amendment. Evangelicals also advocated home schooling and private Christian schools to shield children from what they saw as the public schools’ permissiveness and secularist (nonreligious) values.

Christian bookstores, radio stations, and TV evangelists fueled the revival. Falwell’s *Old Time Gospel Hour*, Robertson’s *700 Club*, and Jim and Tammy Bakker’s *PTL* (Praise the Lord) program attracted a loyal following. The so-called electronic church suffered after 1987 amid sexual and financial scandals, but the evangelical resurgence continued. Evangelicals found certitude in their shared faith and profoundly influenced late-twentieth-century American life.

Engel v. Vitale Supreme Court’s 1962 decision prohibiting organized prayer in public schools

Ronald Reagan Fortieth president of the United States; his two terms were marked by patriotic rhetoric, tax cuts, and militant anticommunism

Not all evangelicals were political conservatives, however. Most African-American evangelicals retained their Democratic Party loyalties. In general, however, resurgent evangelicalism strengthened the larger conservative movement of the 1970s. **Ronald Reagan** rode this powerful conservative tide to the White House.

Conservatism Triumphant: The 1980 Election

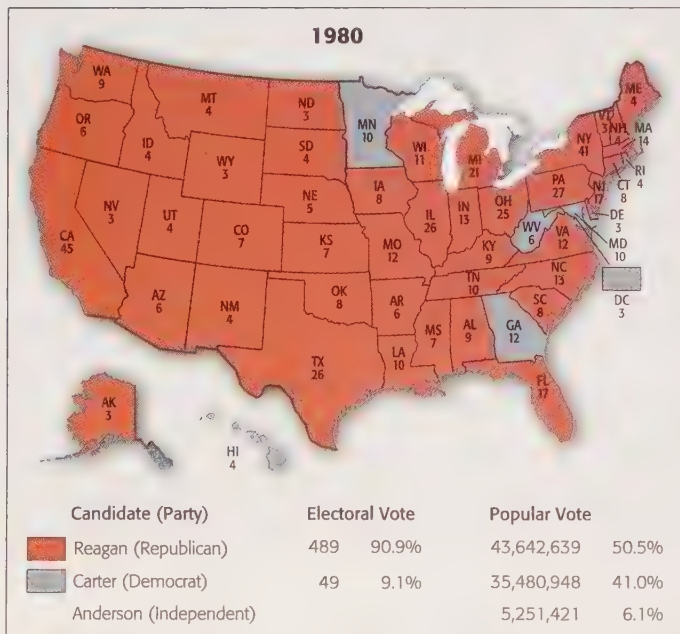
Reagan grew up in Dixon, Illinois, the son of an alcoholic father and a devout mother. In 1937, after a stint as a radio sports announcer, he went to Hollywood for a screen test. His fifty-four films proved forgettable, but he gained political experience as president of the Screen Actors' Guild. A New Dealer in the 1930s, Reagan moved rightward in the 1950s, and in 1954 became the General Electric Company's corporate spokesperson. As governor of California (1967–1975), he espoused conservative ideas and denounced campus demonstrators, but also proved open to compromise.

In the 1980 Republican primaries, Reagan bested his principal opponent, George H. W. Bush (father of the later President George W. Bush), whom he then chose as his running mate. Belying his sixty-nine years, he campaigned vigorously against President Jimmy Carter. In the election, Reagan garnered 51 percent of the vote (see Map 30.1), while Republicans gained eleven Senate seats and trimmed thirty-five seats from the Democrats' majority in the House of Representatives.

Benefiting from the erosion of Democratic strength in the South fostered by George Wallace and Richard Nixon, Reagan carried every southern state except Carter's own Georgia. Over half of white blue-collar workers, once solidly Democratic, voted Republican. Of FDR's New Deal coalition, only black voters remained solidly Democratic.

Jerry Falwell's pro-Reagan Moral Majority registered an estimated 2 million new voters in 1980 and 1984. The organization disbanded after 1984, but Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition took its place, mobilizing evangelicals to elect candidates to town councils and school boards as a stepping stone to expanded national influence.

Reagan embraced the conservative movement's cultural agenda, evoking a somewhat mythic era when American life had seemed simpler and traditional values had prevailed. But other factors also underlay Reagan's appeal. Voters frightened by stagflation welcomed his promise that tax cuts would stimulate the economy. Reagan's anti-government rhetoric resonated with white middle-class and blue-collar Americans. Like his one-time political hero Franklin Roosevelt, Reagan promised a new deal.



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Map 30.1 The Election of 1980

Jimmy Carter's unpopularity and Ronald Reagan's telegenic appeal combined to give Reagan a crushing Electoral College victory.



But unlike FDR's, Reagan's new deal meant individualism, smaller government, lower taxes, and untrammelled free enterprise.

Reagan, a seasoned actor, wrapped these themes into an appealing message of moral affirmation and support for "traditional values." At a time of national malaise, he seemed confident and assured. His unabashed patriotism and praise of America's greatness soothed the battered psyche of a nation traumatized by Vietnam, Watergate, and the frustrations of the Ford and Carter years. Population changes contributed to Reagan's success. While New York City, Chicago, Detroit, and other Democratic strongholds in the Northeast and Midwest lost population in the 1970s, Texas, California, Florida, and other more conservative Sun Belt states grew.

Enacting the Conservative Domestic Agenda

Reagan's economic plan, dubbed "Reaganomics" by the media, boiled down to the belief that the free-enterprise system, if freed from heavy taxes and regulations, would achieve wonders of productivity. Reagan proposed a 30 percent cut in federal income taxes over three years. Trimming this proposal slightly, Congress voted a 25 percent cut: 5 percent in 1981, 10 percent in both 1982 and 1983.

To partially counterbalance the lost revenues, Congress slashed more than \$40 billion from domestic spending. Economists warned that the tax cut would produce huge federal deficits, but Reagan insisted that lower tax rates would stimulate business growth, pushing up tax revenues. In the Republican primaries, George Bush had ridiculed Reagan's rosy predictions as "voodoo economics," but as vice president he tactfully remained silent.

Business deregulation had begun under Carter, but Reagan extended it into new areas such as banking, the savings-and-loan industry, and communications. Interior Secretary James Watt of Wyoming opened federal wilderness areas, forest lands, and coastal waters to oil, gas, and timber companies and cut back on environmental and endangered species protections. Watt earlier spearheaded the so-called Sagebrush Rebellion, a campaign by ranchers, farmers, and mine owners to shift federal lands in the West to state and county control. The Sierra Club and other environmental organizations protested Watt's policies. After various public-relations gaffes, Watt resigned in 1983.

Reagan had little sympathy for organized labor. In 1981, when the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO) went on strike, Reagan invoked the 1948 Taft-Hartley law against strikes by federal employees and ordered them back to work. When more than eleven thousand PATCO members defied the order, Reagan fired them and barred them permanently from federal employment.

To combat continuing inflation (see Chapter 29), the Federal Reserve Board pushed up interest rates. This harsh medicine, coupled with falling oil prices, pushed the inflation rate down from double digits to around 4 percent by 1983. But high interest rates also brought on a recession. By late 1982, unemployment stood at 10 percent. Reagan's cuts in social programs worsened the plight of the poor, including inner-city blacks and Hispanics. The Fed's policy also drove up the value of the dollar, hurting U.S. exports. With exports declining and U.S. consumers buying

cars, TVs, and stereo systems made in Japan and elsewhere, the trade deficit soared to \$111 billion in 1984.

Facing a recession and rising federal budget deficits, Reagan in 1982–1983 slowed military spending, approved emergency job programs, restored some spending on social programs, and authorized tax increases disguised as “revenue-enhancement measures.” Nevertheless, the recession hurt Reagan’s popularity, and in the 1982 midterm elections, the Democrats regained twenty-six House seats.

By 1983, an economic rebound was under way. Encouraged by tax cuts and lower inflation, consumer spending increased and the stock market surged. Brokerage firms lured new investors. Corporate mergers proliferated. Savings-and-loan (S&L) companies, newly deregulated, ladled out billions to developers planning shopping malls, condominiums, and retirement villages.

However, the Wall Street frenzy had an unsavory underside. Famous money manager Ivan Boesky went to prison after a 1986 conviction for insider trading (profiting through advance knowledge of corporate actions). The high-flying S&L industry would collapse in 1988 (as detailed later in this chapter). The 1987 film *Wall Street* captured the spirit of the decade. As protagonist Gordon Gekko, a hard-driving speculator, puts it: “Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right, greed works. Greed . . . captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit.”

On October 19, 1987, the stock market crashed, reducing the paper value of the nation’s stocks by 20 percent overnight. The market soon recovered, but the collapse had a sobering effect on giddy investors. Even during the boom, systemic economic problems persisted. Federal budget deficits surpassed \$200 billion in 1985 and 1986. Budget deficits, the trade deficit, and a savings-and-loan crisis related to deregulation rank among the negatives of Reagan’s economic legacy.

Reagan also shaped the Supreme Court. His 1981 selection of Sandra Day O’Connor as the first woman Supreme Court justice won praise. He nudged the high court in a conservative direction in 1986 by elevating William Rehnquist, a Nixon appointee, to the chief justiceship upon the retirement of Warren Burger and nominating Antonin Scalia to replace him. Scalia would prove one of the Court’s most outspokenly conservative members. When another vacancy opened in 1987, Reagan appointed Anthony Kennedy, a conservative California jurist.

The Cold War Heats Up

The late 1970s’ deterioration in U.S.-Soviet relations worsened during Reagan’s first term. Addressing a convention of evangelicals, the president demonized the Soviet Union as an “evil empire.” Anti-Soviet fury exploded in September 1983 when the Russians shot down a Korean passenger plane that strayed into their airspace, killing all 269 aboard.

Insisting that post-Vietnam America had grown dangerously weak, Reagan launched a major military expansion. The Pentagon’s budget nearly doubled. Secretary of State Alexander Haig spoke of using “nuclear warning shots” in a conventional war; other officials mused about the “winnability” of nuclear war. Despite protests across Europe, the administration deployed 572 nuclear missiles in Western Europe in 1983. A Defense Department official proposed backyard



Bill Gentile/Historical/Corbis

Anti-Sandinista Contras on Patrol in Nicaragua, 1987

Under Reagan, the CIA recruited, financed, and equipped an army to overthrow Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista regime. This support continued clandestinely despite congressional prohibitions, leading to the so-called Iran-contra scandal.

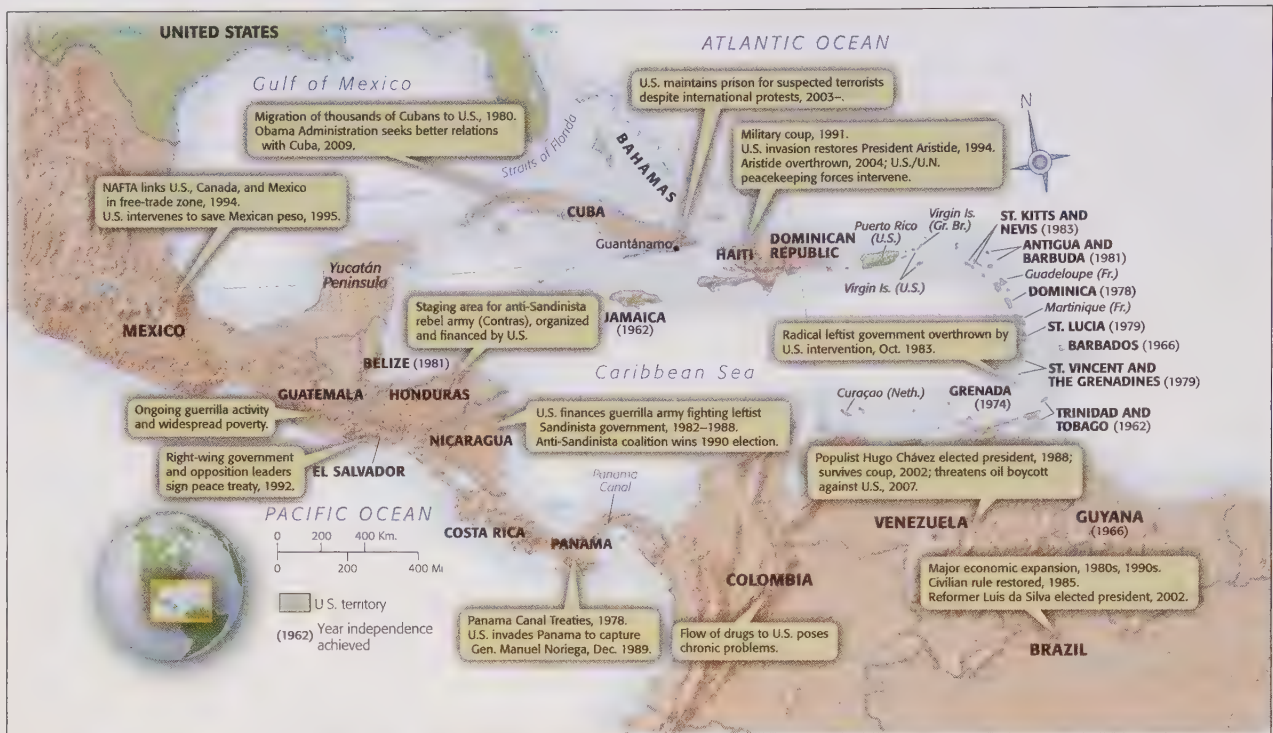
shelters as adequate protection in a nuclear war. "With enough shovels," he asserted, "everybody's going to make it."

Such talk, coupled with the military buildup and Reagan's anti-Soviet rhetoric, sparked a grass-roots campaign for a multinational freeze on the manufacture and deployment of nuclear weapons. Antinuclear protesters packed New York's Central Park in June 1982. That November, voters in nine states, including California and Wisconsin, approved nuclear-freeze referenda.

To counter the freeze campaign, Reagan in March 1983 proposed the **Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)**, a computerized antimissile system involving space-based lasers and other high-tech components. Critics quickly dubbed the scheme "Star Wars" and warned of monumental technical hurdles. Nevertheless, Reagan prevailed, and Congress authorized a costly SDI research program.

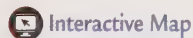
Fearing communist gains in Latin America, the administration backed El Salvador's ruling military junta in its brutal suppression of a leftist insurgency supported by Fidel Castro's Cuba. In Nicaragua, Reagan vigorously opposed the Sandinista insurgents who overthrew dictator Anastasio Somoza in 1979. In 1982, the CIA organized and financed an anti-Sandinista guerrilla army, called the contras,

Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) Costly "Star Wars" program to build a missile defense system



Map 30.2 The United States in Central America and the Caribbean, 1978–2006

Plagued by poverty, population pressures, repressive regimes, and drug trafficking, this region experienced turmoil and conflict—but also hopeful developments—in recent decades.



based in neighboring Honduras and Costa Rica. The contras conducted raids, planted mines, and carried out sabotage inside Nicaragua that killed many civilians (see Map 30.2).

Fearing another Vietnam, Congress late in 1982 voted a yearlong halt in U.S. military aid to the contras, and in 1984 imposed a two-year ban. Ignoring these prohibitions, the White House secretly continued to funnel money contributed by right-wing groups and foreign governments to the contras. When this subterfuge became known, a major scandal resulted. Reagan's one unqualified success in Latin America involved the tiny island of Grenada, where a 1983 coup had installed a pro-Castro government. In October 1983, two thousand U.S. troops invaded Grenada and substituted a pro-U.S. government.

In Afghanistan, the Reagan administration (extending a policy started by President Carter) secretly funneled funds and equipment to Islamic fighters, called mujahadeen, battling to expel Russian troops that had invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Ironically, young **Osama bin Laden**, a wealthy Saudi Arabian who would later become a deadly foe of America, was also helping to finance the mujahadeen, putting him and the United States briefly on the same side.

Reagan's anticommunist fervor and determination to make America “stand tall” again in the world had broad appeal. So did his tax cuts and celebration of

Osama bin Laden Radical Islamic terrorist who master-minded murderous attacks against the U.S. military and civilians

the nation's free-enterprise system. Americans also liked Reagan's upbeat style, typified by his jaunty response in March 1981 when a ricocheting bullet fired by a deranged young man struck him in the chest. Rushed to the hospital, Reagan insisted on walking in. "Please tell me you're all Republicans," he quipped to physicians.

With Reagan's approval ratings rising as the recession faded, he and Vice President Bush were enthusiastically re-nominated at the 1984 Republican convention. Staged for TV, the convention accented themes of patriotism, prosperity, and Reagan's personal charm.

The Democratic hopefuls included civil-rights leader **Jesse Jackson**. In the Democratic primaries, Jackson garnered 3.5 million votes and won five southern states. But former vice president Walter Mondale captured the nomination with backing from traditional Democratic constituencies. His vice-presidential choice, New York congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro, became the first woman to run on a major-party presidential ticket.

Reagan's ideological and personal appeal, combined with prosperity, proved decisive. Reagan and Bush won 59 percent of the popular vote and carried every state but Mondale's Minnesota plus the District of Columbia. The Republicans' post-1968 dominance of the White House—interrupted only by Jimmy Carter's single term—continued.

In 1985, frustrated by the Democrats' image as a "big government" and "tax-and-spend" party, Arkansas governor Bill Clinton, Tennessee senator Al Gore, and others formed the more centrist Democratic Leadership Council (DLC). Clinton would later use the DLC as a springboard for a presidential bid.

Reagan's second-term achievements included the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act and a tax-reform law making the system less complicated. These were overshadowed, however, by a White House scandal involving the abuse of executive power and by a dramatic easing of Cold War hostilities.

The Iran-Contra Scandal and a Thaw in U.S.-Soviet Relations

The worst crisis of Reagan's presidency, the so-called **Iran-contra scandal**, began obscurely in 1986 when a Beirut newspaper reported that in 1985 the United States had shipped, via Israel, 508 antitank missiles to Iran, America's avowed enemy. Admitting the sale, Reagan claimed the goal had been to encourage "moderate elements" in Tehran and to gain the release of U.S. hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian groups. In February 1987, a presidentially appointed investigative panel blamed Reagan's chief of staff, Donald Regan, who resigned.

Next came the revelation that **Oliver North**, a National Security Council aide in the White House, had secretly diverted profits from the Iran arms sales to the Nicaraguan contras despite Congress's ban on such aid. To hide this crime, North and his secretary had altered and destroyed incriminating documents. A congressional investigative committee convened in May 1987 found no proof that Reagan knew of illegalities, but criticized the lax management and contempt for the law that pervaded the White House. In 1989, North was convicted of obstructing a congressional inquiry and destroying and falsifying official documents. (The conviction was later reversed on a technicality.)

Jesse Jackson Civil-rights leader whose "rainbow coalition" campaign for president in 1984 garnered 3.5 million votes

Iran-contra scandal Scandal in which the Reagan administration sold weapons to Iran to illegally finance contras

Oliver North Marine colonel at the heart of supplying illegal aid to the contras

Other scandals plagued Reagan's second term. Attorney General Edwin Meese resigned in 1988 amid influence-peddling charges. In 1989 came revelations that former interior secretary James Watt and other prominent Republicans had collected hundreds of thousands of dollars for using their influence to help housing developers seeking federal subsidies. However, Reagan's popularity seemed unaffected; some dubbed him the Teflon president—nothing stuck to him.

Reagan's second term also brought a dramatic warming in Soviet-American relations. At meetings in Europe in 1985 and 1986, Reagan and Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev revived the stalled arms-control process. Beset by economic problems at home and by spreading unrest in Eastern Europe, Gorbachev worked to reduce superpower tensions while pursuing his ambitious goals: restructuring the economy, loosening Moscow's grip in Eastern Europe, and bringing more openness to Russia's government. In December 1987, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the **Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty**, eliminating twenty-five hundred U.S. and Soviet missiles from Europe. This, in turn, led to Reagan's historic visit to Moscow in May 1988, where the two leaders strolled in Red Square.

The INF treaty and Reagan's trip to Moscow marked a significant thaw in the Cold War. Historians still debate the relative importance of Reagan's military buildup versus the Soviet Union's internal weaknesses in producing this outcome. Whatever the final judgment on that point, the fact that one of America's most dedicated Cold Warriors presided over the early stages of the Cold War's demise remains a striking irony of recent U.S. history.

Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty Title of the first treaty to ban an entire class of nuclear weapons; major U.S.-Soviet agreement

Conflict and Terrorism in the Middle East and Beyond

For U.S. diplomats, the Middle East remained a major challenge. Events in this region directly affected U.S. security, economic interests, and international relations. In 1980, Iraq under strongman Saddam Hussein invaded its neighbor Iran. The incoming Reagan administration, hoping to slow the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, backed Iraq in what would prove to be an eight-year war. (Two decades later, the United States would invade Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein, covered in Chapter 31.)

As the administration confronted the ongoing conflict among Israel, the Palestinians, and Israel's Arab foes, it faced conflicting interests. The United States gave its ally Israel large annual grants in military aid and other assistance, while also providing aid to Egypt and the Palestinians and importing oil from Saudi Arabia and other Arab states.

In June 1982, when extremists linked to the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) shot and critically wounded Israel's ambassador to Great Britain, Israeli troops under Defense Minister Ariel Sharon attacked PLO bases in southern Lebanon and forced its leaders, including chairman Yasir Arafat (**YAH-seer AHR-uh-faht**), to evacuate the country.

In September 1982, Reagan ordered two thousand marines to Lebanon as part of a multinational force to keep peace among the country's religious and political factions. On October 23, 1983, a Shiite Muslim crashed an explosives-filled truck into a U.S. barracks, killing 239 marines. Early in 1984, Reagan withdrew the surviving marines.

In 1987, Palestinians launched an intifada, or uprising, against Israeli occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since the 1967

war. In response, Secretary of State George Shultz (who had replaced Alexander Haig in 1982) proposed negotiations leading to an independent Palestinian state. Israel refused to negotiate until the intifada ended, however, and the Palestinians rejected Shultz's proposals for not assuring Palestinian interests. Over U.S. objections, Jewish settlement continued in the occupied territories.

A deadly byproduct of the Middle East conflict was a series of bombings, assassinations, hijackings, and hostage-takings by anti-Israel and anti-American terrorists. At the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich, Palestinian gunmen killed eleven Israeli athletes. In 1985, terrorists set off bombs in the Vienna and Rome airports and hijacked a TWA flight en route from Athens to Rome, killing one passenger, a U.S. sailor. That same year, armed men demanding the release of Palestinians held by Israel hijacked an Italian cruise ship, dumping a wheelchair-bound Jewish-American passenger into the sea.

A 1986 bombing of a Berlin club popular with Americans killed two GIs and injured others. Accusing Libyan strongman Muammar al-Qaddafi of masterminding this and other attacks, Reagan ordered the bombing of Libyan military sites. But the attacks continued. In December 1988, a bomb detonated aboard Pan Am flight 103, which crashed near Lockerbie, Scotland, killing all 259 aboard, including many Americans.

This terrorism reflected bitter religious and political divisions. Hatred of Israel gripped parts of the Muslim world. Radical Islamic clerics called for jihad (holy war in defense of Islam) against a secular West that seemed increasingly dominant militarily, economically, and culturally. The stationing of U.S. troops in Saudi Arabia, as well as expanding Jewish settlements in the Palestinian territories, also fed the anger that fueled terrorist attacks.

Despite terrorist attacks and festering problems in the Middle East, many Americans felt confident about the nation and its stature in the world as Reagan's term ended. After Nixon's disgrace, Ford's caretaker presidency, and Carter's rocky tenure, Reagan's two terms restored a sense of stability to U.S. politics. Domestically, Reagan compiled a mixed record. Inflation eased, and the economy improved after 1982. But the federal deficit soared, and the reduction of the government's regulatory role planted the seeds of future problems.

Building on Richard Nixon's strategy, Reagan exploited the anxieties of middle-class white voters. He dismissed the social activism of the 1960s, criticized affirmative-action programs, and ridiculed the welfare system by recounting urban legends about Cadillac-driving "welfare queens."

To Reagan's critics, at best his presidency seemed an interlude of nostalgia and drift. Reagan's celebration of individual freedom, they charged, could readily morph into self-centered materialism. Apart from individualism, anticommunism, and flag-waving patriotism, they contended, Reagan offered few common goals around which all Americans could rally. In 1988, former chief of staff Donald Regan published a memoir that portrayed Reagan as little more than an automaton: "Every moment of every public appearance was scheduled, every word was scripted, every place where Reagan was expected to stand was chalked with toe marks."

Reagan's admirers praised him for reasserting the values of self-reliance and free enterprise, criticizing governmental excesses, and

CHECKING IN

- Reagan entered office stressing optimism, patriotism, tax cuts, and cultural conservatism.
- "Reaganomics" led to sharp tax cuts, an even sharper rise in the federal deficit, and reduced federal regulation of business and industry.
- The administration nearly doubled military spending and promoted the controversial "Star Wars" missile defense system.
- Illegal aid to the Nicaraguan contras was the most spectacular of several scandals that beset Reagan's second term.
- Reagan eventually met with the Soviets and reached arms-control agreements that began to wind down the Cold War.
- Major problems flared in the Middle East as the intifada (uprising) erupted among Palestinians; terrorism surfaced as a major threat.

restoring national pride. The mood at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, they suggested, when exuberant American fans waved flags and chanted “USA, USA,” captured the nation’s newly discovered confidence. Reagan’s militant anticommunism and military buildup, they contended, hastened the Soviet collapse and America’s Cold War victory. Alzheimer’s disease darkened Reagan’s post-presidential years, but “the Reagan revolution” still influences American politics.

DOMESTIC DRIFT AND A NEW WORLD ORDER

What were George H. W. Bush’s principal achievements and failures as president?

George H. W. Bush Forty-first president; his successes abroad were overshadowed by a mixed record at home

George H. W. Bush, elected president in 1988, was a patrician in politics. Son of a Connecticut senator, a Yale graduate, and a World War II bomber pilot, he entered the Texas oil business, served in Congress, and was a UN ambassador and CIA director before becoming Reagan’s running mate in 1980. As president, Bush reacted decisively when Iraq invaded Kuwait, but he proved less impressive on domestic issues.

1988: The Conservative Momentum Continues

Easily winning the 1988 Republican presidential nomination, Bush in his acceptance speech called for a “kinder, gentler America” and pledged, “Read my lips: no new taxes.” On the Democratic side, Jesse Jackson again did well in the primaries, but Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis, winning in New York and California, captured the nomination.

In the campaign, Bush emphasized prosperity and improved Soviet relations, while distancing himself from the Iran-contra scandal. Dukakis emphasized his managerial skills and urged “Reagan Democrats” to return to the fold. But Dukakis seemed wooden, and his focus on competence rather than ideology made it difficult for him to define his political vision. Both candidates relied on sound bites and TV-oriented “photo opportunities.” Bush visited flag factories and military plants. Dukakis proved his toughness on defense by posing in a tank. Bush won, carrying forty states and garnering 54 percent of the vote. The Democrats, however, retained control of Congress.

The Cold War Ends; Global Challenges Persist

As Bush took office, the Soviet Union’s collapse, heralded by the opening of the Berlin Wall, proceeded with breathtaking rapidity. East Germany’s communist regime imploded. The Baltic republics annexed by Moscow in 1940—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—declared independence. The other Soviet republics moved toward autonomy as well. In July 1991, President Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev signed a treaty reducing their nuclear arsenals by 25 percent and NATO announced major troop reductions.



AP Photo/Michael E. Sauter, FILE

Michael Dukakis Campaigns for President in 1984

To demonstrate his firmness on military preparedness, the Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis posed in a tank, but seemed dwarfed by the helmet and heavy machinery.

In August 1991, die-hard communists tried to overthrow Gorbachev. But thousands of Muscovites, rallied by Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Republic, protectively surrounded Moscow's parliament building, and the coup failed. Gorbachev, overwhelmed by forces he himself had unleashed, soon resigned, and Boris Yeltsin filled the power vacuum. The Cold War was over. President Bush proclaimed: "[N]ow we stand triumphant—for a third time this century—this time in the wake of the Cold War. As in 1919 and 1945, we face no enemy menacing our security."

But even as Americans savored the moment, a host of new problems arose. As the Soviet Union fragmented into a loose federation of independent nations, Secretary of State James Baker worked to ensure the security of nuclear missiles based in Russia and in newly independent Ukraine (*you-CRANE*), Belarus (*bell ah-ROOS*), and Kazakhstan (*ka-ZAHK-stan*), and to prevent rogue states or terrorists from acquiring nuclear materials.

For decades, the superpowers had backed client states and rebel insurgencies around the world. As the Cold War faded, prospects brightened for resolving some local disputes. In Nicaragua, Bush abandoned the U.S.-funded contra war against

the leftist Sandinista government. In the Philippines, the United States closed two U.S. naval bases under pressure from the Philippines legislature.

Meanwhile, South Africa's policy of racial segregation—apartheid—provoked worldwide protests. In 1986, over Reagan's veto, Congress joined other nations in imposing economic sanctions against white-ruled South Africa. Yielding to these pressures and to an anti-apartheid campaign in South Africa itself, the South African government in 1990 released black leader Nelson Mandela (**man-DELL-uh**) after years in prison. When South Africa scrapped its apartheid policy in 1991, President Bush lifted the sanctions. In 1994, Mandela was elected president and his party, the African National Congress, assumed power.

In 1989, Chinese troops brutally crushed a pro-democracy demonstration in Beijing's Tiananmen (**tee-yehn-ahn-men**) Square, killing several hundred students and workers. The Bush administration curtailed diplomatic contacts, but Bush, committed to expanding U.S. trade, did not break diplomatic relations or cancel trade agreements with Beijing.

The Persian Gulf War, 1991

On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded neighboring Kuwait (**koo-WAIT**). Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein, viewed Kuwait's ruling sheiks as Western puppets and asserted Iraq's historic claims to Kuwait's vast oil fields.

During the Iran-Iraq War, the United States had backed Iraq. But now, confronted by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, an important oil-producing nation, Bush responded decisively. In addition to assembling a force of more than five hundred thousand U.S. troops, Bush also built a multi-nation coalition that contributed additional troops. When Saddam ignored UN economic sanctions and a resolution demanding Iraq's withdrawal by January 15, 1991, both houses of Congress endorsed military action. Most Democrats voted against war, however, favoring continued economic sanctions. Memories of Vietnam stirred as Americans debated another war.

Beginning on January 16, U.S. bombers pounded Iraqi troops, supply depots, and command centers in Iraq's capital, Baghdad. In retaliation, Saddam fired Soviet-made Scud missiles against cities in Israel and Saudi Arabia, which supported the U.S.-led war. As TV viewers watched distant explosions filmed through greenish aircraft bombsights, the war seemed hardly real, almost resembling a video game.

On February 23, two hundred thousand U.S. troops moved across the desert toward Kuwait (see Map 30.3). Thousands of Iraqi soldiers fled or surrendered. With Iraqi resistance crushed, President Bush declared a cease-fire, and Kuwait's ruling family returned to power. U.S. casualties numbered 148 dead and 467 wounded. Iraqi military casualties were estimated at twenty-five thousand to sixty-five thousand. The Iraqi government claimed that U.S. bombs also killed twenty-three hundred civilians. For President Bush, the **Persian Gulf War** proved that Americans were prepared to use force to pursue national interests. "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all," he declared.

Bush and his national-security advisers rejected the urging of some who favored invading Iraq itself and overthrowing Saddam Hussein. The UN did impose

Persian Gulf War Conflict in which a U.S.-led coalition army ousted Saddam Hussein's Iraq army from Kuwait in 1991

Americans with Disabilities Act Law that bars discrimination against handicapped in jobs and education

“no-fly zones” on Iraqi aircraft, and a somewhat chastened Saddam granted UN inspectors access to his weapons-production facilities. Nevertheless, Saddam’s army brutally suppressed antigovernment uprisings by Iraq’s Shiite Muslims and ethnic Kurds.

Troubles at Home: Economic Woes, Racial Tensions, Environmental Threats

As for Bush’s domestic record, a rare accomplishment was the **Americans with Disabilities Act** of 1990. Supported by Bush, this law barred discrimination against disabled persons in hiring or education. Thanks to this law, job opportunities for handicapped persons increased and public schools enrolled more physically or developmentally impaired children. Otherwise, the Bush years saw more problems than achievements on the home front.

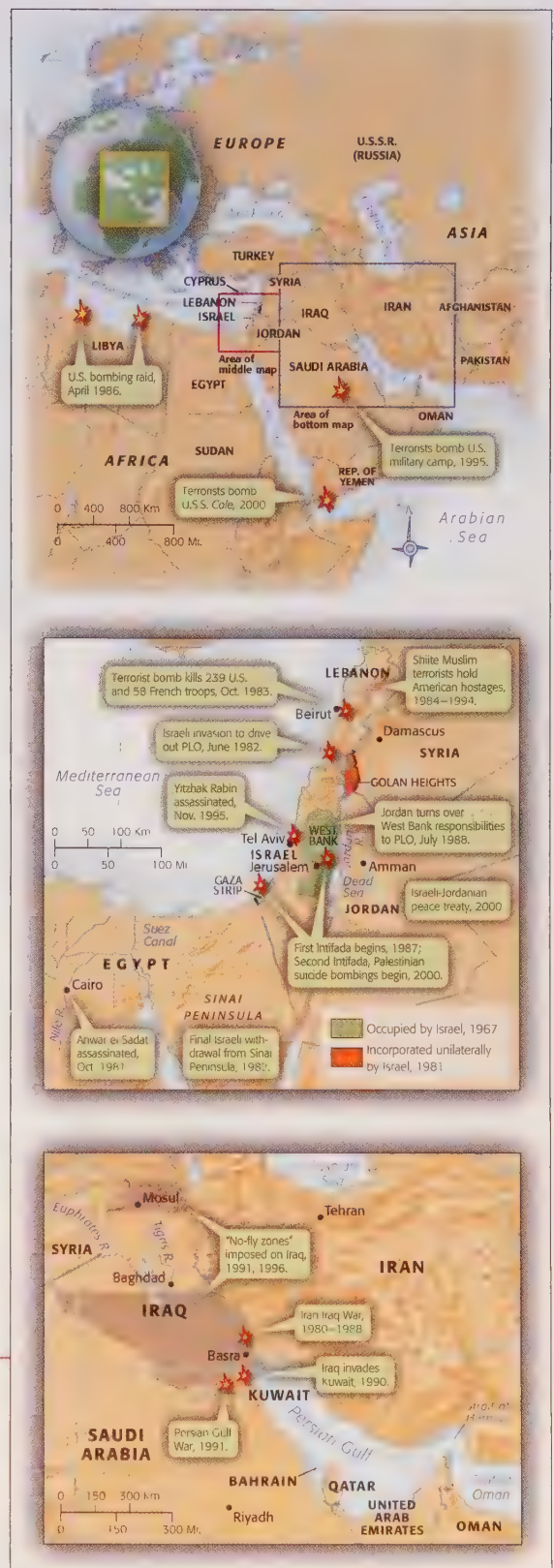
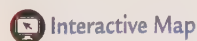
By the early 1990s, the impact of Reagan-era tax cuts and deregulation began to hit home. First came the collapse of the savings-and-loan (S&L) industry. In the late 1970s, as inflation pushed up interest rates, the S&Ls offered higher interest to retain investors, even though the S&L’s assets were mostly in fixed-rate mortgages. Following the Reagan tax cuts, money flowed into S&Ls. Meanwhile, in the deregulatory fervor, Congress eased the rules governing S&Ls, enabling them to make loans on risky real-estate ventures. As recession hit, many of these investments went bad. In 1988–1990, nearly six hundred S&Ls failed, wiping out depositors’ savings.

Because the government insures S&L deposits, the Bush administration in 1989 set up a program to repay depositors and sell hundreds of foreclosed office towers and apartment buildings in a depressed market. Estimates of the bailout’s cost topped \$400 billion.

Meanwhile, the federal deficit continued to mount, thanks in part to Reagan’s tax cuts and military spending. In 1990, Congress and the administration agreed on a deficit-reduction plan involving spending cuts and tax increases.

Map 30.3 The Mideast Crisis, 1980–2000

With terrorist attacks, the Iran-Iraq War, the Persian Gulf War, and the ongoing struggle between Israel and the Palestinians, the Middle East saw almost unending violence and conflict in these years.



Bush's retreat from his "no new taxes" pledge angered voters. Despite this plan, the 1992 deficit neared \$300 billion.

Making matters worse, another recession struck in 1990. Retail sales slumped; housing starts fell. General Motors, battered by Japanese imports, laid off more than seventy thousand workers. By 1992, the jobless rate exceeded 7 percent. If 1984 was "morning in America," wrote a columnist, quoting a Reagan campaign slogan, this was "the morning after."

The recession worsened inner-city poverty and despair. In April 1992, an outbreak of arson and looting in Watts, the predominantly black district of Los Angeles and scene of rioting in 1965 (see Chapter 28), left forty persons dead and millions in property damage. The immediate cause was outrage over a jury's acquittal of four white police officers whose brutal beating of a black motorist had been captured on videotape.

America's environmental worries increased during Bush's presidency. In March 1989, a giant oil tanker, the *Exxon Valdez*, ran aground in Alaska's Prince William Sound, spilling more than 10 million gallons of oil. The accident fouled coastal habitats, killed thousands of sea otters and shore birds, and jeopardized Alaska's fisheries. Bush deplored the spill, but insisted that America's energy-hungry economy required ever more quantities of oil, coal, and natural gas.

That summer, air pollution in many U.S. cities exceeded federal standards. A 1991 Environmental Protection Agency study found that pollutants were eroding the atmosphere's ozone layer, which reduces cancer-causing solar radiation. Growing numbers of scientists also warned of global warming related to increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the role of human activity in causing it. Squeezed between growing environmental concern and his party's free-market ideology, Bush signed a stricter Clean Air Act passed by the Democratic Congress in 1990, but otherwise backed oil exploration in Alaskan wilderness preserves and left other environmental concerns unaddressed.

Of President Bush's two Supreme Court nominations, David Souter, a moderate, won easy confirmation. With **Clarence Thomas**, however, Bush continued Reagan's effort to push the court to the Right. Bush nominated Thomas in 1991 to replace Thurgood Marshall, the black jurist who had played a role in the historic Brown school desegregation case (see Chapter 27). Thomas, also African-American, supported right-wing causes and, as head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) under Reagan, had opposed affirmative-action programs. Noting his weak judicial qualifications, critics charged Bush with playing racial politics.

In the Senate confirmation hearings, a former staff member at EEOC, Anita Hill, accused Thomas of sexual harassment. Thomas narrowly won confirmation, but Republican efforts to discredit Hill's testimony alienated many women, and their resentment appeared to play a role when women candidates did well in the 1992 elections.

On the Court, Thomas allied with Antonin Scalia, Chief Justice Rehnquist, and other Republican-appointed justices who supported expanded executive power and a strict interpretation of the Constitution. The conservative bloc narrowed the rights of arrested persons; curbed death-penalty appeals; cut back affirmative-action

Clarence Thomas

Ultraconservative Bush appointee to the Supreme Court, who was challenged on grounds of alleged sexual harassment



Bob Daemrich Photography

Bill and Hillary Clinton Campaigning in Texas, August 1992

Holding a future voter as microphones record the moment, Bill Clinton demonstrates the popular appeal that helped him win the presidency. Hillary Clinton would soon emerge as a powerful political figure in her own right.

programs; and, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992), upheld a Pennsylvania law imposing restrictions on abortion providers.

1992: America's Voters Choose a New Course

Given President Bush's popularity after the Persian Gulf War, many top Democrats opted out of the 1992 presidential race. But Arkansas governor **William (Bill) Jefferson Clinton** took the plunge. Fending off reports of marital infidelity, Clinton won the nomination. As his running mate, he chose Tennessee senator **Albert (Al) Gore, Jr.**

President Bush quashed a primary challenge by conservative columnist Pat Buchanan. A third-party candidate, **H. Ross Perot** (pair-OH), founder of a Texas data-processing firm, insisted he could easily solve the nation's economic problems.

William (Bill) Jefferson Clinton

Forty-second president; his controversial two-term presidency was marked by a surging economy at home

Albert (Al) Gore, Jr. Tennessee senator and noted expert on environmental issues who served as Clinton's vice president

H. Ross Perot Texas billionaire who ran for president as a third-party candidate in 1992 and 1996

At his peak of popularity, nearly 40 percent of the voters backed Perot, but his eccentricities and thin-skinned response to criticism cost him support.

CHECKING IN

- The Cold War ended suddenly with the collapse of the Soviet Union in late 1991.
- When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, Bush forged a coalition to drive him out; although driven from Kuwait, Saddam retained power in Iraq.
- Despite foreign-policy successes, the Bush administration accomplished little domestically; recession struck, environmental concerns accelerated, and racial tensions exploded into riots.
- Bush attempted to move the Supreme Court to the right with the appointment of the controversial, conservative Clarence Thomas.
- Arkansas governor Bill Clinton defeated Republican George H. W. Bush and third-party candidate Ross Perot to win the presidency in 1992.

Bush attacked Clinton for evading the Vietnam-era draft and promised more attention to domestic issues in a second term. Clinton hammered on the recession and the problems of the middle class. He pledged to work for a national health-care system, welfare reform, environmental protection, and economic growth.

Clinton won 43 percent of the vote to Bush's 38 percent. Perot's 19 percent was the best for a third-party candidate since Teddy Roosevelt in 1912. Clinton lured back many blue-collar and suburban "Reagan Democrats." The recession, Bush's lackluster domestic record, and the divisive Perot campaign all helped Clinton. With Democrats now in control of Congress and the White House, an end to the much-deplored "Washington gridlock" seemed possible.

Thirty-eight African-Americans and seventeen Hispanics won congressional seats. The new Senate included six women and the House had forty-seven. Illinois elected the first African-American woman senator, Carol Moseley Braun.

Apart from the Persian Gulf War, President Bush's single term proved unmemorable. A *New York Times* editorial, judging him "shrewd and energetic in foreign policy . . . , clumsy and irresolute at home," went on: "The domestic Bush flops like a fish, leaving the impression that he doesn't know what he thinks or doesn't much care, apart from the political gains to be extracted from an issue."

DOMESTIC AND GLOBAL ISSUES AT CENTURY'S END

What policy issues, political events, and economic trends most influenced Bill Clinton's presidency?

Clinton's presidency soon encountered setbacks, notably the failure of an ambitious national health-care plan. The 1994 midterm election then produced a Republican landslide. The newly energized congressional Republicans pursued their conservative agenda, including sweeping welfare reform.

Clinton preferred domestic issues, but world events dictated attention to foreign policy. Abroad, four key challenges loomed: promoting stability in the former Soviet Union, improving relations between Israel and the Palestinians, addressing security threats posed by nuclear proliferation and Islamic terrorism, and protecting U.S. trade and investment interests.

Trade, Gay Rights, Health Care: Clinton's Mixed Record

Born in Arkansas in 1946, Bill Clinton was part of the baby-boom generation that admired Elvis and came of age in the era of JFK, Vietnam, and the Beatles. After finishing Yale Law School, he returned to Arkansas, where he was elected governor at age thirty-two. At age forty-six, he was president.

As a founder of the New Democratic Coalition—moderates eager to shed the party's "ultraliberal," "tax and spend" reputation—Clinton in his campaign stressed middle-class concerns and muted the party's traditional attention to the poor and social-justice issues. Seeking middle ground on abortion, he said it should be "safe, legal, and rare." He strongly endorsed environmental protection; indeed, his running mate, Al Gore, in 1992 published an environmental manifesto, *Earth in the Balance*.

Committed to the woman's movement, Clinton named women to head several cabinet departments and advisory panels. To fill a Supreme Court vacancy in 1993, he nominated Judge Ruth Bader Ginsberg. In 1996, he named **Madeleine K. Albright** as secretary of state—the highest U.S. government office ever held by a woman.

To reduce the budget deficit and combat the recession, Clinton proposed military spending cuts, tax increases, and programs to stimulate job creation and economic growth. With Clinton's support, Congress in 1993 ratified the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**, negotiated by the Bush administration. This pact admitted Mexico to the U.S.-Canadian free-trade zone created earlier. While Ross Perot and others warned that U.S. jobs would flee to Mexico, NAFTA backers predicted a net job gain as Mexican markets opened to U.S. products.

Other early Clinton initiatives failed, however. Fulfilling a campaign pledge to gay-rights organizations, Clinton proposed to end the ban on gays in the military. When religious conservatives and some military leaders protested, he backed off. A study commission crafted a compromise, summed up in the phrase "Don't ask, don't tell." It continued the ban, but also barred officers from querying service members about their sexual orientation. (This policy remained the law of the land until President Barack Obama signed a repeal act into law in December 2010.)

Health-care reform proved an even greater minefield. With Medicare costs exploding, and millions of citizens lacking health insurance, this issue stood high on Clinton's "to do" list, and he appointed his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton to head a health-care task force. Working in secret, this group devised a sweeping plan for cost containment and universal health insurance. Lobbyists for physicians, insurance and tobacco companies, and other special interests rallied the opposition. By fall 1994, the ambitious plan was dead. Clinton had misread public complaints about the existing system as support for radical change.

Jolted by these setbacks, Clinton in 1994 turned to issues with broad voter appeal: crime and welfare reform. His anticrime bill included a ban on assault weapons and funds for more prisons and police officers. Clinton's welfare-reform bill put a two-year limit on payments from the federal welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). After that, able-bodied recipients would have to find work, in a public-service job if necessary. In 1995, having regained control of Congress, Republicans shaped their own, even tougher bill (discussed shortly).

The approaching midterm election found the administration mired in problems. Republican critics publicized the Clintons' earlier involvement in a murky Arkansas real-estate speculation, the Whitewater Development Company. The 1993 suicide of assistant White House counsel Vincent Foster, the Clintons' close friend, attracted conspiracy theorists. In 1994, Paula Jones, an Arkansas state employee, sued Clinton for alleged sexual harassment during his governorship.

Favorable economic news helped Clinton somewhat. By 1994, the unemployment rate had fallen, inflation remained low, and the federal deficit was dropping.

Madeleine K. Albright

Clinton's secretary of state; at the time, she had the highest government office ever held by a woman

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

Agreement to create a free trade community involving the United States, Canada, and Mexico

Christian Coalition

Conservative evangelical lobbying group with growing influence over the Republican Party in the 1990s

Newt Gingrich Republican congressman from Georgia who helped bring his party to power; elected Speaker of the House in 1994

But radio commentator Rush Limbaugh won fans for his jeering attacks on the Clintons and liberals in general. The religious Right remained a potent political force. In addition, Pat Robertson's **Christian Coalition**, with hundreds of chapters nationwide, controlled several state Republican Parties.

**Conservative
Resurgence and
Welfare Reform:
1994–1996**

Bill Clinton had run as a “new Democrat,” but by 1994 Republicans tarred him as an old “tax-and-spend” Democrat, beholden to gays, feminists, and other “special interests.” The failed health-care plan, they charged, simply perpetuated the New Deal/Great Society style of top-down reform.

A network of conservative organizations, from the Christian Coalition to the National Rifle Association, helped re-energize the rightward swing in U.S. politics. Direct-mail campaigns and conservative radio commentators tirelessly hammered such hot-button issues as abortion, gun control, gay rights, school prayer, “radical feminism,” and an alleged erosion of “family values.”

Republican congressman **Newt Gingrich** (**GING-rich**) of Georgia mobilized the discontent. In September 1994, about three hundred Republican congressional candidates signed Gingrich's “Contract with America” pledging to support tax cuts, tougher crime laws, antipornography measures, a balanced-budget amendment, and other reforms. The Contract nationalized the midterm election, which was normally fought on local issues.

In November, voters gave the GOP control of both houses of Congress for the first time since 1954 and increased the number of Republican governors. Evangelicals turned out in large numbers, mostly to vote Republican. In the Senate, North Carolina's reactionary Jesse Helms became chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. In the House of Representatives, a jubilant horde of 230 Republicans, seventy-three of them newly elected, chose Newt Gingrich as Speaker, made Rush Limbaugh an “honorary member,” and set about enacting the Contract with America. A constitutional amendment requiring a balanced federal budget passed the House but narrowly failed in the Senate. Fulfilling the antipornography pledge, Congress passed a Communications Decency Act strengthening the government's censorship powers. (In 1997, the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional.)

The torrent of bills, hearings, and press releases recalled the heady days of the early New Deal and Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. At this time, however, the activist energy came from the conservative side of the political spectrum. The architect of this revolution, Newt Gingrich, stumbled in 1995 when he accepted, then returned, a \$4.5 million advance from a publishing house owned by Rupert Murdoch, a media tycoon with interests in federal legislation. Gingrich's network of political action groups also drew critical scrutiny.

Turning to welfare reform, congressional Republicans criticized the existing system on both economic and public-policy grounds. AFDC, with 14.2 million women and children on its rolls, cost about \$125 billion in 1994. Though dwarfed by the benefits enjoyed by the middle class through social security, Medicare, farm subsidies, and various tax loopholes, this still represented a budgetary drain. On public-policy grounds, the critics contended that the welfare system encouraged

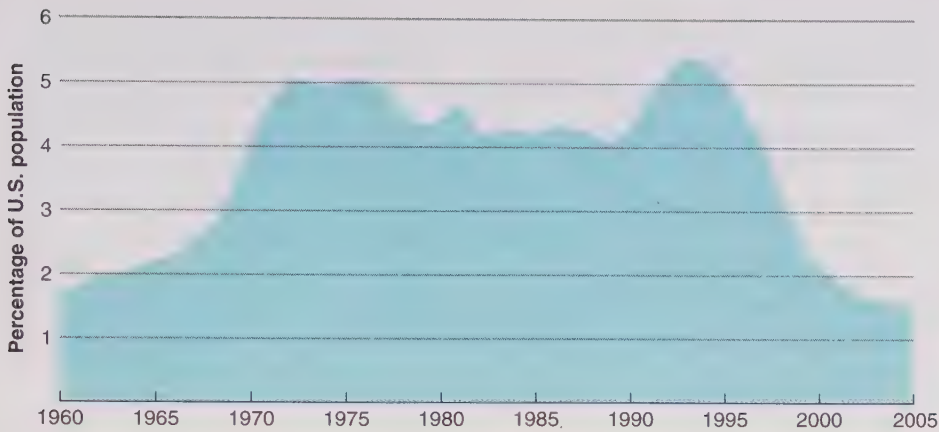


Figure 30.1 Percentage of U.S. Population on Welfare, 1960–2005

From just 1.7 percent in 1960, the percentage of Americans on welfare crept steadily upward until 1994. The post-1994 decline reflected both improved economic conditions and the impact of the Welfare Reform Act of 1996.

Sources: Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services; House Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Human Resources Report, Feb. 26, 2006.

irresponsible social behavior and trapped recipients in a multigenerational cycle of dependence.

As a consensus emerged on the existing system's flaws, debate focused on how to change it. While Clinton favored federally funded child-care and job-training programs to ease the transition from welfare to work, Republicans argued that businesses, the states, and private agencies could best provide these services. After vetoes of two other bills, Clinton eventually signed the **Welfare Reform Act of 1996**. The law replaced AFDC with block grants to states to develop their own programs within funding limits and guidelines restricting recipients to two years of continuous coverage, with a five-year lifetime total.

Advocates for the poor warned of the effects on inner-city children whose mothers lacked education or job skills, but many observers rated welfare reform at least a qualified success (see Figure 30.1). From 1996 to 2005, the number of families on welfare fell by 57 percent. The percentage of unmarried mothers in the work force rose from around 48 percent in 1996 to around 65 percent in 2000, although many held low-paying, unskilled jobs, and changed jobs frequently.

Welfare Reform Act of 1996

Legislation in which Clinton joined Republicans to end AFDC and move thousands off welfare rolls

A Pandora's Box of Dangers in a Post-Cold War World

The aftershocks of the Soviet collapse unsettled the region of southeastern Europe known as the Balkans (**BALL-kuns**). In Yugoslavia, an unstable nation comprised of Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, and other enclaves, the ruling Communist Party collapsed in 1990. As Yugoslavia broke apart, Serbian forces launched a campaign of "ethnic cleansing" in neighboring Bosnia, where they killed or drove out Muslims and Croats. In August 1995, after UN peacekeepers failed to stop the killing, a joint U.S. and NATO operation launched air strikes against Bosnian Serb targets.

Kosovo Province of former Yugoslavia victimized by a Serbian ethnic-cleansing campaign

Later in 1995, the Clinton administration flew the leaders of Bosnia's warring factions to Dayton, Ohio, for talks. The resulting Dayton Accords imposed a cease-fire and created a governing framework for Bosnia. Clinton committed twenty thousand U.S. troops to a NATO operation to enforce the cease-fire.

In 1998, when Serbian forces attacked Muslims in Serbia's southern province, **Kosovo**, Clinton approved U.S. bombing of Serbian facilities, including Belgrade, the capital, as part of a NATO response. As Serb forces withdrew from Kosovo, U.S. troops joined a NATO occupying force, and refugees slowly returned. In 2001, a new Serbian government, eager for Western aid, delivered Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic (**sluh-BOW-den muh-LOW-sevich**) to a war-crimes tribunal at The Hague.

Russia, meanwhile, invaded the breakaway Islamic republic of Chechnya (**CHECH-nee-uh**) in 1995. This war proved unpopular in Russia, and the Clinton administration watched anxiously as President Boris Yeltsin's position weakened. Hard times and corruption linked to Russia's hasty conversion to a free-market economy further undermined Yeltsin.

Despite Yeltsin's erratic behavior, compounded by alcoholism, the Clinton administration continued to support him. In 1999, the administration backed Russia's admission to the Group of Seven (G-7), a collection of the world's leading industrialized nations. In the same year, however, over Russia's protests, the United States supported NATO's decision to admit three new members from the former Soviet bloc—Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. With Yeltsin's resignation in December 1999, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin (**VLAH-dee-meer POO-tun**), a former agent of the KGB, the Soviet secret police, succeeded him as president, opening a new chapter in the tortured history of U.S.-Russian relations.

In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which was of vital concern to America, prospects brightened in 1993 when Israeli and Palestinian negotiators meeting in Norway agreed on a timetable for peace. The so-called Oslo Accords provided for a Palestinian state, land concessions by Israel, and further talks on Palestinian refugees' claims and the final status of Jerusalem. In 1994, President Clinton presided as Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (**YEET-shahk rah-BEEN**) and Yasir Arafat of the PLO signed the agreement at the White House.

After hopeful beginnings, however, this initiative failed. In 1995, a young Israeli opposed to the Oslo Accords assassinated Rabin. Israel's next election brought to power Benjamin Netanyahu (**net-ahn-YA-hoo**) of the hard-line Likud (**li-KOOD**) Party. Suicide bombings in Israel by Palestinian extremists in 1996–1997 triggered retaliatory attacks. By 2000, the West Bank and Gaza had an estimated two hundred thousand Jewish settlers, with accompanying checkpoints, security forces, and limited-access highways making existence difficult for Palestinians.

In July 2000, Clinton invited Arafat and Israel's new prime minister, Ehud Barak (**EH-hood buh-RAHK**), of the more moderate Labour Party, for talks at Camp David. Barak made major concessions. Arafat rejected Barak's offer, however, and the summit failed. In September, hundreds of Israeli soldiers and police briefly occupied Jerusalem's Temple Mount, which was sacred to both Muslims and Jews. This action symbolically asserted Israel's control of the site. The Palestinians launched a new intifada, and in 2001 Israelis elected the hard-liner Ariel Sharon prime minister. As Clinton left office, the conflict raged on.

Iraq also claimed Clinton's attention. In 1997, when Saddam Hussein barred UN inspectors from facilities suspected of conducting research on chemical and nuclear weapons, Clinton dispatched ships, bombers, and troops to the Persian Gulf and sought support for a multinational military strike. But France, Russia, and various Arab states resisted, and the stand-off continued.

Other nations, too, posed threats of nuclear proliferation. Neither India nor Pakistan, at odds over the disputed region of Kashmir (**KAHSH-meer**), had signed the 1968 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. In 1988, India tested a "nuclear device" and Pakistan soon followed. North Korea, despite having signed the Nonproliferation Treaty, also pursued nuclear-weapons development and missile testing. In 1999, confronting famine and economic crisis, North Korea suspended missile testing in return for an easing of U.S. trade and travel restrictions. The country's nuclear intentions remained worrisome, however.

Terrorism: "The War of the Future"

Attacks by anti-American Islamic extremists continued. A February 1993 bomb blast in a parking garage beneath one of the towers of New York's World Trade Center killed six persons, injured hundreds, and forced fifty thousand workers to evacuate. Five Islamic militants were arrested, and three were convicted of murder and given life sentences.

The terrorist threat extended to Africa. In 1992, President Bush committed twenty-six thousand U.S. troops to a UN humanitarian mission in Somalia (**soh-MAH-lee-uh**), a predominantly Muslim East African nation beset by civil war and famine. As the warring factions battled, forty-four Americans were killed. President Clinton withdrew the U.S. force in 1994, and the UN mission ended a year later. Later evidence implicated Islamic extremists directed by Osama bin Laden (**oh-SAHM-uh bin LAH-dun**) in the killings. Son of a wealthy Saudi contractor, bin Laden had been expelled from Saudi Arabia in 1991 and settled in Sudan, where he plotted anti-Western terrorist activities.

On August 7, 1998, simultaneous bomb blasts at the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (**tan-zuh-NEE-uh**), killed 220—including twelve Americans. U.S. intelligence again pinpointed bin Laden, by now organizing terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. Clinton ordered cruise missile strikes on one of these Afghan camps as well as on a suspected chemical-weapons factory in Sudan allegedly financed by bin Laden. On October 12, 2000, a bomb aboard a small boat in the harbor of Aden (**AH-den**), Yemen (**YEH-mun**), ripped a gaping hole in the U.S. destroyer *Cole*, killing seventeen sailors.

Defining America's Role amid Global Changes

As Americans confronted these myriad international dangers, the peaceful post-Cold War era that many had anticipated seemed a cruel mirage. The Soviet adversary had collapsed, but crises still flared around the world. Like firefighters battling many small blazes rather than a single conflagration, policy makers now wrestled with a baffling tangle of issues.

globalization The removal of barriers to the flow of capital, goods, and ideas across national borders

Amid the complexities, some larger trends could be discerned. Economic and even cultural **globalization** played an ever greater role. International trade and finance increasingly shaped America's foreign-policy interests. American movies, popular music, and television programs reached a worldwide audience in an age of instant telecommunications.

Along with globalization, however, came a widening chasm that divided the prosperous, comparatively stable industrialized world from societies marked by poverty, disease, illiteracy, and explosive population growth. This vast gulf helped spawn resentment, hatred, and terrorism.

Ancient ethnic hatreds burst into violence as the bipolar Cold War world fragmented. The lethal conflict in the former Yugoslavia was far from unique. Similar clashes erupted in many regions. In the African nation of Rwanda (*ruh-WAN-duh*), as many as a million people perished in genocidal violence in 1994, as militias of the ruling Hutu ethnic group massacred members of the once-dominant Tutsi group. Thousands more fled in panic, creating a refugee crisis. Traumatized by the Somalia fiasco, President Clinton did not intervene.

Resurgent religious fundamentalism intensified the global unrest. As Muslim fundamentalists denounced Western liberalism and secularism, a small but lethal minority embraced violence as a religious duty. Confronting such complexities, some U.S. citizens simply gave up. In a 1997 poll, only 20 percent of Americans said they followed foreign news, down sharply from the 1980s, with the biggest drop among young people. TV coverage of events abroad fell by more than 50 percent from 1989 to 1995.

Newt Gingrich's 1994 Contract with America largely ignored foreign policy, and key Republican legislators pushed isolationist views. Jesse Helms, as chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, denounced the United Nations, criticized environmental treaties, and belittled UN peacekeeping efforts and America's foreign-aid program. Congressional Republicans refused to pay \$1 billion in past UN dues. Bending to such pressures, Clinton in 1998 declined to sign a multinational treaty banning land mines.

Despite isolationist currents, however, opinion polls indicated that most Americans supported internationalist approaches to global problems. The U.S. part in negotiating the Dayton Accords that brought a fragile peace to Bosnia offered a noteworthy instance of this role. Another came in 1995 when President Clinton appointed former Democratic senator George Mitchell as a special envoy to Northern Ireland to promote negotiations between Catholics favoring independence and Protestants advocating continued ties to Great Britain. Mitchell's efforts were rewarded in 1998 when the two sides signed a peace agreement.

With the Cold War's end, the United Nations seemed better positioned to fulfill the role its supporters had envisioned in 1945. Indeed, by 2000, more than forty thousand UN peacekeepers and civilian personnel were deployed in fifteen world trouble spots. A complex network of UN agencies addressed global environmental, nutritional, public-health, and human-rights issues. The UN-sponsored International Court of Justice at The Hague adjudicated disputes between nations and tried perpetrators of mass violence.

CHECKING IN

- Clinton was a fiscally moderate "New Democrat" determined to focus on domestic issues, although his health-care reform initiative failed.
- The 1994 elections brought conservative Republicans to control of Congress; Clinton worked with them for a far-reaching overhaul of welfare.
- Clinton committed U.S. troops to a NATO peacekeeping effort in the Balkans; chastened in Somalia, Clinton did not intervene in the Rwanda genocide.
- The United States helped negotiate the Oslo Accords, providing for a Palestinian state, but progress stalled.
- Nuclear proliferation remained a concern; as terrorism directed at Americans and the West increased, the outlines of a "new world order" became clear.

MODERATION, WHITE HOUSE SCANDAL, AND A DISPUTED ELECTION, 1996–2000

Why did political differences become sharper from 1996 to 2000?

Straddling the political center, Bill Clinton won reelection in 1996. Along with sending U.S. forces to Kosovo and the final stab at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, his second term saw a battle over tobacco-industry regulation and a sex scandal that led to his impeachment. A disputed presidential election in 2000 deepened the nation's divisions.

Clinton Battles Big Tobacco and Woos Political Moderates

Bill Clinton won the nickname “the Comeback Kid” following a long-shot victory in the 1992 New Hampshire primary, and after the 1994 Republican landslide he again hit the comeback trail. In a 1995 budget battle, Clinton outmaneuvered House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who annoyed voters by twice allowing a partial government shutdown.

As the 1996 electoral campaign began, Kansas senator Bob Dole, a partially disabled World War II veteran, won the Republican nomination. Although fundraising scandals marred Clinton's reelection campaign, the seventy-three-year-old Dole ran a lackluster campaign, and Clinton won with 49 percent of the vote to Dole's 41 percent. (Ross Perot garnered 8 percent.) The Republicans retained control of Congress, but proved more subdued than after their 1994 triumph.

Tobacco regulation loomed large as Clinton's second term began. In 1997, facing lawsuits by former smokers and by states saddled with medical costs linked to smoking-related diseases, the tobacco industry agreed to pay some \$368 billion in settlement. The agreement limited tobacco advertising, especially when directed at young people.

Since the agreement required government approval, the debate shifted to Washington. The Clinton administration backed a bill imposing tough penalties, higher cigarette taxes, and stronger antismoking measures. The industry struck back with a \$40 million lobbying campaign and heavy contributions to key politicians, killing the bill. The Republican Party, commented Arizona Republican senator John McCain, appeared to be “in the pocket of the tobacco companies.” In 1998, the tobacco industry and most states reached a new settlement, which was scaled back to \$206 billion.

Pursuing his middle-of-the-road strategy, Clinton in his January 1998 State of the Union address offered some initiatives to help the poor, but mostly highlighted proposals attractive to the middle class and fiscal conservatives. Some liberals dismissed the speech as “Progressivism Lite,” but it had broad appeal. Further, Clinton's economic policies contributed to the decade's prosperity and in 1998 produced the first federal budget surplus in nearly thirty years. Under normal circumstances, Clinton's record would have assured that his presidency, despite early missteps, would end in a glow of success. But Clinton's situation was far from normal.

A Media Field Day as Scandal Grips the White House

Monica Lewinsky White House intern whose brief liaison with Bill Clinton was discovered by Whitewater investigators

Even as Clinton went about his duties, scandal swirled around his presidency. Adultery charges had long clung to Clinton, and now he faced Paula Jones's sexual-harassment suit, dating from his days as Arkansas governor.

Seeking to document a pattern of sexual harassment, Jones's lawyers quizzed Clinton about rumors linking him to a young White House intern, **Monica Lewinsky**. Under oath, Clinton and Lewinsky denied everything. As the rumors became public, Clinton denounced them as false. Clinton settled Paula Jones's suit, but problems remained. In taped phone conversations, Lewinsky had described a White House affair with Clinton. The tapes were acquired by Kenneth Starr, an independent counsel investigating the Clintons' Arkansas real-estate dealings.

Starr's inquiry now shifted to whether Clinton had committed perjury in his Paula Jones testimony and persuaded Lewinsky to lie. In August, after a promise of immunity, Lewinsky admitted the affair to a grand jury. As the scandal unfolded in tabloid headlines and late-night television jokes, Clinton in a brief TV address conceded "inappropriate" behavior but attacked Starr as politically motivated.

In a September 1998 report to the House Judiciary Committee, Starr recommended Clinton's impeachment for perjury and obstructing justice by coaching his secretary on his version of events. In a party-line vote, the House approved and sent to the Senate two articles of impeachment: perjury and obstruction of justice.

The public, however, sent the Republicans an ominous message: Clinton's approval ratings rose, and the Democrats gained five House seats in the 1998 midterm elections. Few believed the president's actions met the Constitution's "high crimes and misdemeanors" standard for removal from office. With the economy booming and Clinton's political program generally popular, voters appeared willing to tolerate his personal flaws. After a trial presided by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the Senate rejected both charges in February 1999, and the trial ended. In November, Newt Gingrich, a leader of the impeachment effort but now embroiled in his own ethical controversies, resigned as Speaker and left Congress.

While the impeachment failed, the scandal tarnished Clinton's reputation. Still facing legal liability as he left office in January 2001, the president admitted to perjury, paid a \$25,000 fine, and lost his law license for five years.

2000: Divided Nation, Disputed Election

As the 2000 campaign approached, the Democrats nominated Vice President Al Gore for the top job. Distancing himself from the Lewinsky scandal, Gore chose as his running mate Connecticut senator Joseph Lieberman, who had denounced Clinton's behavior.

In the Republican contest, Arizona's somewhat maverick senator John McCain, a Vietnam-era prisoner of war, made a strong bid. But Texas governor **George W. Bush**, with powerful backers, a familiar name, and a folksy manner, won the nomination. The environmentally minded Green Party nominated consumer advocate Ralph Nader.

Both Gore and Bush courted the center while trying to hold their bases. For Bush, this base included corporate interests, energy companies, religious conservatives, and

George W. Bush Forty-third president; son of the former president Bush, he promised to restore dignity to the White House

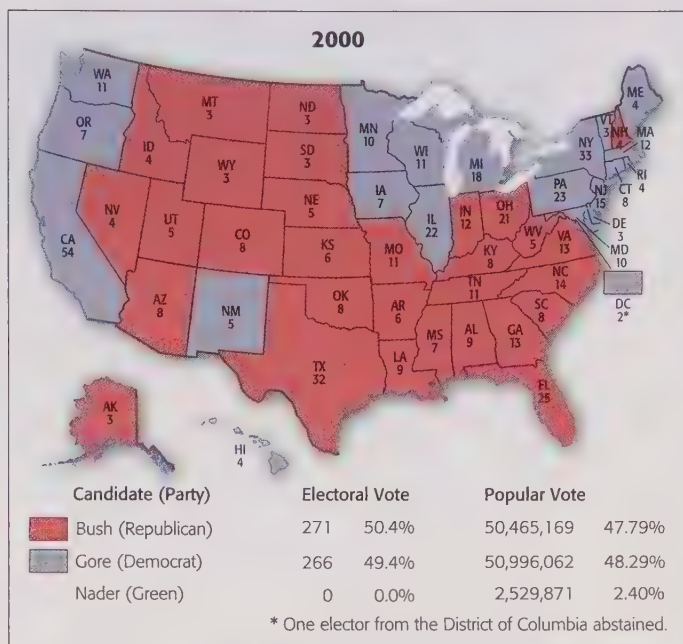
so-called Reagan Democrats in the middle class and blue-collar ranks. Gore's base included liberals, academics and professionals, union members, environmentalists, feminists, and African-Americans. The Hispanic vote remained divided.

Gore boasted of the nation's prosperity and pledged to extend health-care coverage and protect social security. In TV debates, Gore was more articulate and knowledgeable, but some found him rather pompous. Bush, with little experience outside Texas, was widely seen as a lightweight, dependent on family influence. Calling himself a "compassionate conservative," Bush subtly reminded voters of Clinton's misdeeds by promising to restore dignity to the White House. Polls showed that most voters agreed with Gore on the issues, but preferred Bush as a person.

On election day, Gore won the popular vote by more than five hundred thousand. But the all-important Electoral College outcome came down to Florida, where a handful of votes separated the two candidates. Flaws in Florida's voting process quickly emerged. In counties with many black voters, antiquated voting machines rejected thousands of ballots in which the paper tabs, called "chads," were not fully punched out. When election officials began a hand count of rejected ballots, Bush's lawyers sued to prevent it.

On November 21, the Florida Supreme Court, with a preponderance of Democrats, unanimously ruled that the ongoing recount should constitute the official result. Bush's legal team appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court (see Map 30.4). Despite a long-established precedent that state courts should decide electoral disputes, the justices accepted the case. On November 26, ignoring the unresolved legal dispute, Florida's secretary of state, Katherine Harris, certified the original, contested Florida vote, awarding Bush the state. (Harris was co-chair of Bush's Florida campaign.)

The Supreme Court on December 12, by a 5-to-4 vote, halted the recount and let Harris's ruling stand. Gore conceded the next day. Five Supreme Court justices (all Republican appointees) had made George W. Bush president. Third-party candidate Ralph Nader also helped Bush win. Had the nearly one hundred thousand Floridians who voted for Nader not had that option, Gore would almost certainly have won the state and the presidency. The election produced an evenly divided Senate, giving Vice President Cheney the deciding vote. The Republicans narrowly held the House of Representatives.



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Map 30.4 The Election of 2000

For the first time since 1888, the winner of the popular vote, Al Gore, failed to win the presidency. The Supreme Court's intervention in the disputed Florida outcome put George W. Bush in the White House.

[Interactive Map](#)

CHECKING IN

- Clinton continued to move to the center, achieving tax cuts and a balanced budget (with surpluses by the end of his term).
- The Monica Lewinsky scandal erupted; Kenneth Starr broadened the Whitewater investigation to include the Lewinsky affair and other accusations of sexual misconduct.
- The Republican-controlled House impeached Clinton, but the Senate did not convict; despite impeachment, Clinton's popularity remained high.
- In the 2000 election, Gore won the popular vote, but the electoral vote remained undecided because of disputed ballots in Florida.
- The Supreme Court intervened, in effect awarding the election to Bush.

ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL TRENDS AT CENTURY'S END

What economic trends, technological innovations, and cultural trends shaped American life in the 1990s?

The 1990s saw sustained economic growth, increased productivity, falling unemployment, low inflation, and the first federal budget surplus in years. Economic globalization fueled U.S. economic growth, but when foreign economies faltered, the American economy stumbled as well.

As corporate profits surged and the stock market soared, America exuded a glow of abundance amid leisure-time diversions and get-rich-quick enthusiasm. But real wages lagged, many workers lacked the skills valued by the emerging knowledge-based economy, and the gap between the super wealthy and most Americans widened. A continuing AIDS epidemic, outbursts of violence, and bitter cultural disagreements also characterized American society as the twentieth century ended.

An Uneven Prosperity

From 1992 to 2000, the unemployment rate fell from 7.5 percent to 4 percent. The gross domestic product, a key economic indicator, rose nearly 40 percent in the decade.

The boom had varied sources, but the revolution in information technology was crucial. Bulky typewriters, calculators, and adding machines—the information technologies of earlier eras—gathered dust as people shifted to computer-based word processing and data management. The computer-based Internet, developed for the Defense Department, initially linked only military installations. By the 1990s, thanks to new software and a system called the World Wide Web, the Internet and e-mail were revolutionizing communications and information-sharing.

Wall Street stock prices far outran many companies' actual earnings prospects. From under 3,000 in 1991, the Dow Jones Industrial Average approached 12,000 by early 2001. Leisure pursuits and consumer spending burgeoned. In 2000, Americans spent \$105 billion on new cars and \$107 billion on video, audio, and computer equipment. However, a few economists raised cautionary flags. In 1996, Federal Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan warned of "irrational exuberance" in the stock market, but with little effect.

Surging information technology (IT) stocks fed the boom. The NASDAQ composite index, loaded with technology stocks, shot up from under 500 in 1991 to over 5,000 by early 2000. Some stock offerings by unknown IT start-up companies hit fantastic levels, turning young entrepreneurs into paper millionaires. As the stock market roared on, companies sought to improve their profitability through mergers and acquisitions. In 2000, communications giant Viacom swallowed CBS for \$41 billion.

The prosperity was spotty, however. From 1979 to 1996, the share of the total national income going to the wealthiest 20 percent of Americans increased by 13 percent, while the share going to the poorest 20 percent dropped by 22 percent. Adjusted for inflation, the buying power of the average worker's paycheck fell or remained flat from 1986 to 2000. As corporations maintained profits by downsizing,



Dick Reed/Corbis

The Hummer, Macho Vehicle of the 1990s

The Hummer was a civilian version of the Humvee, a military vehicle used in the Persian Gulf War. These gas-guzzling behemoths became status symbols during the economic boom of the 1990s. General Motors stopped production of the largest model in 2006 and shuttered the brand completely in 2010.

cost cutting, and exporting jobs overseas, workers faced uncertain times. The growing service sector included not only white-collar positions, but also low-paying jobs in fast-food outlets, custodial work, car washes, telemarketing, and so forth. Only 13.5 percent of the labor force was unionized in 2000, eroding this means by which workers had historically bettered their wages and job conditions.

Overall employment statistics also obscured racial and ethnic variables. In 2000, the jobless rate for blacks and Hispanics remained significantly higher than the rate for whites. Some newcomers with training in special skills found well-paying positions, but many took low-paying, unskilled jobs with few benefits or long-term prospects. In short, while many Americans prospered during these boom years, millions more experienced minimal gains or none at all.

As the economy boomed and banks passed out credit cards like candy, consumer debt soared alarmingly. Unscrupulous finance companies offered would-be homeowners mortgages they could ill afford. The deregulation of business and banking that began in the late 1970s and continued through the Clinton years (and beyond) encouraged these dangerous trends. Credit buying and the deregulation mania gave the economy a glow of prosperity, but also laid the groundwork for a harsh recession (see Chapter 31).

America and the World Economy

Multinational economic considerations increasingly shaped U.S. foreign policy. Despite China's human rights abuses and one-party rule, Clinton welcomed Chinese president Jiang Zemin in 1997 and visited China in 1998. This reflected economic realities. In 2000, U.S. imports from China surpassed \$100 billion, making it America's fourth largest trading partner, after Canada, Mexico, and Japan.

In 1997–1998, a banking and credit crisis threatened the booming export economies of Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia, and other Asian nations, and indirectly jeopardized the U.S. economy. The International Monetary Fund, a Washington-based agency to which the United States is the largest contributor, put together a \$40 billion bailout package to stabilize the situation. As the crisis spread to Japan, Brazil, and Argentina, U.S. prosperity looked increasingly vulnerable. All this underscored how deeply the United States had become enmeshed in a complex global economy.

Affluence and a Search for Heroes

The economic boom produced vast wealth for some and an orgy of consumption that set the decade's tone. Wall Street and Silicon Valley spawned thousands of youthful millionaires. Surveying the lifestyles of the newly rich in 1997, *Vanity Fair* magazine described New York as "the champagne city, making the brash consumption of the 1980s look like the depression." Elegant restaurants offered absurdly expensive cigars and wines; exclusive shops sold \$13,000 handbags. Attendance at the Disney

The McMansion: Domestic Architecture as Conspicuous Consumption

As some Americans grew rich in the boom years of the 1980s and 1990s, ostentatious and pretentious houses, nicknamed McMansions, sprang up across the country.



theme parks in Florida and California neared 30 million in 2000. The sales of gas-guzzling sport-utility vehicles (SUVs) soared.

The boom encouraged a hard-edged “winner take all” mentality like that of the Gilded Age, when the rich turned their backs on the rest of society. In *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2000), political scientist Robert Putnam found diminished civic engagement; weakened interest in public affairs; and a more self-absorbed, individualistic society. Meanwhile, the mass culture offered escapist fare. The 1997 film *Titanic* grossed \$600 million. The top-rated TV show of 1999–2000, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, celebrated raw greed. So-called reality shows like *Survivor* offered viewers a risk-free taste of challenges that contemporary American life itself conspicuously lacked.

The Clinton sex scandals often seemed like little more than another media diversion in a sensation-hungry decade. But the popular culture also offered evidence of more complex social crosscurrents. Some critics interpreted *Titanic*, which sided with its working-class hero in steerage against the rich snobs in first class, as a comment on America's widening class differences. One even called the movie “an exercise in class hatred.” Dissatisfaction with a materialistic culture and money-driven politics, some suggested, found expression in bestselling books about past heroes and more heroic times, such as David McCullough's *Truman* (1993) and Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation* (1998), about the GIs who fought in World War II.

The 2001 film *Pearl Harbor*, argued critic Frank Rich, reflected a longing “for what is missing in our national life: some cause larger than ourselves.” Concluded Rich: “Even those Americans who are . . . foggy about World War II . . . know intuitively that it was fought over something more blessed than the right to guzzle gas.”

The AIDS Epidemic Rages On; Outbursts of Violence Stir Concern

Beneath the glow of prosperity, darker currents stirred. The AIDS crisis continued its deadly course. By 2000, U.S. deaths from the disease surpassed 458,000. As knowledge about preventive measures spread and medications were developed to treat HIV, an infection that often precedes full-

blown AIDS, the crisis abated somewhat by the early twenty-first century—but it was far from over. Tony Kushner's two-part play *Angels in America* (1991–1992), as well as the long-running rock musical *Rent* (1996), explored the human and cultural impact of AIDS.

A popular 1999 film, *American Beauty*, and TV's *The Sopranos*, an HBO series about a mobster and his family, explored dark impulses and a violent substratum in American life. However, the violence was not limited to pop-culture fantasy. True, overall crime rates fell nearly 20 percent between 1992 and 2000. But violent outbursts punctuated the decade. Gun deaths exceeded twenty-eight thousand in 2000. In April 1999, two students at Columbine High School near Denver fatally shot twelve students and a teacher before committing suicide. After this massacre, President Clinton called for stricter gun-control laws, but the National Rifle Association fought such efforts.

The violence sometimes arose from the culture wars. In 1998, two youths tortured and murdered a gay student, Matthew Shepard, at the University of Wyoming because of his sexual orientation. As the abortion controversy raged, some “pro-life” advocates turned violent. In the 1990s, at least five physicians who performed

AIDS Acquired immune deficiency syndrome; first diagnosed in 1981

abortions or staff members at clinics providing this service were murdered, and other clinics were bombed.

On April 19, 1995, in the decade's worst incident of mass violence, explosives concealed in a rental truck demolished a federal office building in Oklahoma City, killing 168. Police soon arrested Timothy McVeigh, a Gulf War veteran obsessed with conspiracy theories. McVeigh, convicted of murder, was executed in 2001.

The Oklahoma City bombing came precisely two years after an April 1993 government raid on the Waco, Texas, compound of the Branch Davidians, an apocalyptic religious sect led by David Koresh, who was charged with firearms violations. An earlier confrontation at Waco had left four government agents and six Davidians dead. The April raid ended tragically when fires inside the compound, probably set by Koresh and others, killed some eighty Davidians as federal tanks moved in. Timothy McVeigh boasted that his Oklahoma City attack represented retaliation for Waco.

Culture Wars: A Broader View

While the 1990s' culture wars typically did not descend into violence, they did involve fierce contests that some viewed as a struggle for the nation's soul. The struggle unfolded on many fronts, from televangelists' programs, bookstore shelves, and radio talk shows to school-board protests and demonstrations at family-planning clinics. Some endorsed a constitutional amendment permitting prayer in public-school classrooms; others criticized history textbooks as insufficiently patriotic or excessively multicultural. In 1995, the Smithsonian Institution radically scaled back a planned exhibit marking the fiftieth anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki when politicians and veterans' organizations criticized it for graphically documenting the bombs' human toll and for presenting differing contemporary views of the bombings.

As gays and lesbians grew more vocal politically, conservatives resisted their demands for equality. The Southern Baptist Convention, America's largest Protestant denomination, urged a boycott of Disney World for unofficially sponsoring "Gay Pride" days. The fast-growing evangelical movement denounced the nation's alleged moral decline. Bill Clinton's misdeeds underscored for conservatives the moral rot they saw eating away at America. Activists even complained about Republican politicians who courted their votes but ignored their agenda once in power.

Pat Robertson's *The New World Order* (1991) interpreted world history as a vast conspiracy that will soon end in the rule of the Antichrist. The best-selling *Left Behind* series of novels (1995–2004), coauthored by the conservative activist Tim LaHaye, described an approaching end time when satanic forces will take over America and the world, until Jesus Christ returns to destroy all evildoers and establish a righteous kingdom.

But for whom did the culture warriors speak? In *One Nation After All* (1998), sociologist Alan Wolfe found most contemporary Americans surprisingly tolerant of diverse views and lifestyles. "[T]here is little truth to the charge that middle-class Americans, divided by a culture war, have split into two hostile camps," Wolfe concluded. "Middle-class Americans, in their heart of hearts, are desperate that we once again become one nation."

CHECKING IN

- Mass culture in the 1990s was marked by gaudy commercialism, a fixation with scandal, and a decline in civic participation.
- Although crime declined, outbursts of violence such as the Columbine massacre and the Oklahoma City bombing prompted anxieties about public safety.
- In 1993, a government raid on the Waco, Texas, compound of the Branch Davidians, an apocalyptic religious sect, resulted in some eighty deaths.
- Conservatives gained ground in the "culture wars" in the 1990s and built a mass cultural and political movement.
- Evangelical groups espoused an interpretation of current events based in biblical prophecy and called for the nation to restore "traditional values."

Chapter Summary

What core beliefs guided Ronald Reagan's presidency? (page 741)

Under Reagan's economic policies, dubbed "Reaganomics," sharp tax cuts led to steep deficits, and deregulation reduced government oversight of business, with mixed results. Reagan supplied arms and other aid to the contras in Nicaragua, despite a congressional ban. Military spending soared, including funding for the Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars"). Despite second-term scandals, including Iran-contra, Reagan remained popular. He met with Mikhail Gorbachev as the Cold War wound down. Conditions in the Middle East deteriorated, however, as violence between Palestinians and Israel increased, and a surge in terrorist attacks threatened America and other Western nations.

What were George H. W. Bush's principal achievements and failures as president? (page 752)

The collapse of the Soviet Union ended the Cold War, but new problems quickly replaced old ones. Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait provoked a coordinated response by the United States and its allies, driving him out of Kuwait but allowing him to remain in power in Iraq. Recession struck hard, environmental concerns accelerated, and racial tensions exploded into riots. Bush paid the penalty for his neglect of domestic issues when Americans elected Bill Clinton president in 1992.

What policy issues, political events, and economic trends most influenced Bill Clinton's presidency? (page 758)

Clinton preferred to focus on domestic issues; he pushed a major economic reform package through Congress but failed to achieve health-care reform. Conservative Republicans gained control of Congress in 1994; led by Newt Gingrich, they promised radical change but achieved little. Clinton worked with the Republicans to achieve welfare reform. Clinton committed American forces to the Balkans as peacekeepers. He expressed concern about conflicts in Africa but did not intervene. His attempts at forging an Israeli-Palestinian peace faltered. However, Clinton continued to pursue the dismantling of Cold War nuclear arsenals and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

KEY TERMS

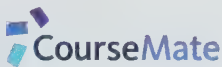
William F. Buckley (p. 741)
 Engel v. Vitale (p. 743)
 Ronald Reagan (p. 744)
 Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) (p. 747)
 Osama bin Laden (p. 748)
 Jesse Jackson (p. 749)
 Iran-contra scandal (p. 749)
 Oliver North (p. 749)
 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty (p. 750)
 George H. W. Bush (p. 752)
 Persian Gulf War (p. 754)
 Americans with Disabilities Act (p. 754)
 Clarence Thomas (p. 756)
 William (Bill) Jefferson Clinton (p. 757)
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 Christian Coalition (p. 760)
 Newt Gingrich (p. 760)
 Welfare Reform Act of 1996 (p. 761)
 Kosovo (p. 762)
 globalization (p. 764)
 Monica Lewinsky (p. 766)
 George W. Bush (p. 766)
 AIDS (p. 771)

Why did political differences become sharper from 1996 to 2000?
(page 765)

Once reelected, Clinton moved to the center, supporting tax cuts and a balanced budget, and actually achieved a budget surplus. However, the Monica Lewinsky scandal undermined these successes and nearly undid his presidency. Based on a lurid report by independent counsel Kenneth Starr, a partisan House impeached Clinton, but Republicans could not muster enough votes in the Senate to convict him. In the disputed 2000 presidential election, finally resolved by the Supreme Court, George W. Bush, son of the former president Bush, defeated Vice President Al Gore.

What economic trends, technological innovations, and cultural trends shaped American life in the 1990s? (page 768)

The stock market soared, partially on the wings of technology stocks, and unemployment fell. Nonetheless, income inequality actually increased. Labor unions, their membership numbers depleted, were powerless to stop the exportation of manufacturing jobs and the passage of NAFTA. The proliferation of 24-hour news television and the rise of the Internet provided the context for a fragmented cultural scene in the 1990s. Scandal and violence filled the airwaves while Americans filled their garages with expensive SUVs and their homes with other consumer goods. Against this seeming debauchery arose an opposition movement, rooted in evangelical Christianity and committed to spreading “family values.”



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tools and review materials—including audio
and video clips—for this chapter.

Global Dangers, Global Challenges

CHAPTER 3 I

2001 to the Present

CHAPTER PREVIEW

America Under Attack: September 11, 2001, and Its Aftermath

How did the Bush administration respond to the September 11, 2001, attacks, internationally and domestically?

Politics and the Economy as a New Century Begins

Beyond security concerns, what economic and social issues did Bush address in his first term?

Debating Iraq and Confronting Other Global Challenges

What challenges faced the United States in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world after 2000?

Social and Economic Trends in Contemporary America

What demographic and economic trends have most shaped contemporary America?

A Floundering Administration Yields to a Renewed Vision

What were the most pressing domestic issues after 2004?

Bao Xiong (**bough shong**), a Hmong-American born in 1977, spent her first two years in a refugee camp in Thailand. The Hmong (**mong**) are an Asian ethnic group that originated in northern China and later

migrated to the mountainous regions of Laos and Vietnam. During the Vietnam War, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency recruited many Laotian Hmong to fight the communists. Facing deadly reprisals after the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, more than two hundred thousand Hmong, including Bao Xiong's family, fled to refugee camps in Thailand. Here they endured terrible conditions.



Barack Obama Campaigns in Springfield, Illinois, August 2008

Tamara Murray/epa/Corbis Wire/Corbis

In 1979, two-year-old Bao came with her family to America. They settled first in East Moline, Illinois, where her father learned English, enrolled in college, and tried—without success—to resume his teaching career. In 1991, the family moved to Milwaukee, where Bao's mother and father started a laundry while also working in factories. Despite their hard life, Bao Xiong's parents inspired her with their love of learning.

After high school, Bao enrolled in college and majored in elementary education. While pursuing her college degree, she also raised three daughters and taught thirty hours a week in a local ESL (English as a Second Language) program. Bao graduated in 2004 and continued her career as a teacher in the Milwaukee school system. "I want to be a role model for my Hmong students," she said. "I very much want to be an influence in their education and their lives."

The Hmong experience is only one chapter in the larger story of immigration in the contemporary United States. American history from the beginning has been shaped by immigration, voluntary and involuntary, from the British Isles, Africa, Europe, Asia, and Latin America, and this remains true in the early twenty-first century.

This final chapter of *The Enduring Vision* looks at the events and trends shaping U.S. history today. While Americans adapted to new immigration patterns, population movements, and unsettling economic changes, differences over cultural issues persisted and a conservative administration in Washington pursued its vision of the nation's future. Looming over the period were the shocking terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the administration's response, including controversial homeland security measures and a bitterly divisive conflict in Iraq. Despite these troubling times, a historic election in 2008 rekindled hope in the nation's enduring capacity for renewal, even in the face of adversity.

AMERICA UNDER ATTACK: SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, AND ITS AFTERMATH

How did the Bush administration respond to the September 11, 2001, attacks, internationally and domestically?

September 11, 2001 Date, emblazoned in national memory, of the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, DC

On **September 11, 2001**, a devastating attack horrified the nation. President George W. Bush mobilized a multinational coalition to invade Afghanistan, stronghold of al Qaeda, the organization responsible. Bush also secured new laws and reorganized federal agencies to tighten homeland security. Accusing Iraq's dictator, Saddam Hussein, of complicity in the 9/11 attacks, Bush launched an invasion of Iraq as well.

Colin Powell Commander of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf War; served as Bush's secretary of state

A New Administration, a Day of Horror

Bush named **Colin Powell**, former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as secretary of state, making him the highest-ranking African-American to serve in a presidential administration. Condoleezza Rice of Stanford University, also African-American, became national security adviser. Other members of the



Chronology

- 2001** Bush administration repudiates Kyoto protocol; Congress passes \$1.35 trillion tax cut bill; stock market falls; wave of corporate bankruptcies and scandals; Congress passes No Child Left Behind Act; terrorist attacks on World Trade Center, Pentagon (September 11); U.S. and allied forces overthrow Taliban regime in Afghanistan; captured Taliban fighters and others imprisoned at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba; USA-Patriot Act passed
- 2002** Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (McCain-Feingold law); Department of Homeland Security created; Bush secretly authorizes National Security Administration to spy without warrants; Republicans gain in midterm elections
- 2003** U.S. and coalition forces invade Iraq (March 21); North Korea withdraws from Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty; prescription-drug benefits added to Medicare
- 2004** Revelation of abuses at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison; George W. Bush wins second term
- 2005** Congress passes Energy Act; trade deficit and budget deficit hit record levels; Bush names John Roberts and Samuel Alito to Supreme Court; Hurricane Katrina devastates New Orleans
- 2006** Tom Delay resigns House seat; Iran resumes nuclear enrichment program; GM and Ford announce major layoffs; Congress debates immigration-law changes; Democrats gain control of both houses in midterm elections
- 2007** Bush sends more troops to Iraq; violence declines; real estate market falls; recession begins
- 2008** United States and Iraq set timetable for U.S. troop withdrawals; recession deepens; major banks fail; job losses increase; Congress passes bank bailout legislation; Barack Obama is elected president; Democrats make gains; Gaza rockets hit Israel; Israel responds with major military attack causing heavy civilian casualties
- 2009** Obama reverses Bush administration on vehicle emissions, stem-cell research; Congress enacts broad economic stimulus package as recession worsens; unemployment spikes above 10 percent
- 2010** BP oil spill fouls Gulf of Mexico; Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act passed; Tea Party movement builds; Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed; "Don't ask, don't tell" policy reversed; Republicans retake House of Representatives
- 2011** Democratic revolutions overturn dictatorships in Tunisia and Egypt; battle over collective bargaining rights of public sector unions erupts in Wisconsin; unemployment falls below 9 percent; Osama bin Laden killed by U.S. special forces in Pakistan

Bush administration, like Vice President **Richard (Dick) Cheney**, were veterans of earlier Republican administrations with corporate ties. Secretary of Defense **Donald Rumsfeld** had held the same post under President Ford and later headed a pharmaceutical company.

Launching his administration, Bush proposed education reforms, tax cuts favoring the wealthy, an energy bill shaped by the energy industries, and initiatives welcomed by his conservative Christian base (as discussed later in this chapter). Apart from this, however, Bush seemed unfocused and attentive mainly to his core supporters. As the year wore on, his approval ratings fell. This situation changed dramatically on September 11, 2001, a day of horror that energized the administration and dominated Bush's remaining years in office. On that morning, three commercial airplanes hijacked by terrorists slammed into the Pentagon outside Washington, DC, and the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center. As Americans watched in horror, the blazing towers collapsed, carrying more than 2,800 men and women to their deaths.

Richard (Dick) Cheney George W. Bush's neoconservative vice president; shaped energy policy and advocated for expanded executive powers

Donald Rumsfeld Secretary of Defense under Bush until 2006



A Day of Horror: September 11, 2001

Smoke billows from the World Trade Center's north tower moments after a commercial aircraft hijacked by terrorists crashed into it.

The Pentagon attack left 245 dead on the ground. A fourth plane crashed in Pennsylvania when heroic passengers overpowered the hijackers. Nearly 250 passengers and crew in the four planes also perished. When investigators identified the nineteen hijackers as Muslims from the Middle East, President Bush urged Americans to distinguish between a few terrorists and the world's 1.2 billion Muslims, including some 6 million in the United States.

As the nation mourned, political divisions faded. The World War II anthem "God Bless America" enjoyed renewed popularity. "United We Stand" proclaimed billboards and bumper stickers. The damaged New York Stock Exchange reopened after six days, but consumer confidence remained fragile. The airline and hospitality industries reeled as jittery travelers canceled trips. Anxiety increased in October, when letters containing deadly anthrax spores appeared in the offices of NBC News, two senators, and a tabloid newspaper. Five persons, including two

postal workers, died from anthrax-tainted mail. In 2008, Dr. Bruce Ivins—a researcher at a U.S. Army biological defense research laboratory at Fort Detrick in Frederick, Maryland—committed suicide after the FBI identified him as the likely perpetrator.

Confronting al Qaeda in Afghanistan

President Bush declared the attacks an "act of war," and on September 14 the Senate unanimously authorized Bush to use "all necessary and appropriate force" to retaliate and to prevent future terrorist attacks. The president's approval ratings neared 90 percent. On September 20, before a joint session of Congress, Bush blamed

Hubert Beisel/opa/Corbis Wire/Corbis

al Qaeda (“the base”), an organization headed by Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. Bin Laden, already under indictment for the 1998 attack on U.S. embassies in Africa, had long denounced America for supporting Israel and for stationing “infidel” troops on Saudi soil.

Bush also targeted the Taliban, a Pakistan-based Muslim fundamentalist movement that had controlled Afghanistan since 1996. This U.S. effort enjoyed NATO backing and broad international support, led by British prime minister Tony Blair. Pakistan’s military government also endorsed Bush’s decision to invade despite Taliban enclaves in Pakistan’s border regions. On October 7, a U.S.-led coalition of forces launched the attack.

The Taliban soon surrendered Kabul, the Afghan capital; by mid-December, the U.S.-led coalition claimed victory. Hundreds of captured prisoners were sent to the U.S. base in **Guantánamo Bay**, Cuba. In June 2002, with U.S. support, Afghan tribal leaders selected Hamid Karzai as leader of an interim government. (Karzai would be elected president in 2004 and reelected in 2009.) However, Osama bin Laden, Taliban leader Mullah Omar, and many al Qaeda loyalists retreated to Afghanistan’s mountainous border with Pakistan—prepared to fight on.

al Qaeda Terrorist organization directed by Osama bin Laden

Guantánamo Bay Naval base in Cuba; site of a controversial prison holding hundreds of alleged terrorists

Tightening Home-Front Security

In late 2001, Congress created the Transportation Security Administration to oversee an expanded force of twenty-eight thousand airport security personnel. Over the protests of civil liberties advocates and some local officials, the Justice Department rounded up hundreds of Middle Easterners in the United States, some for minor visa violations, and held them without filing charges or even revealing their names.

The **USA-Patriot Act**, the administration’s sweeping antiterrorist bill passed by Congress in October 2001, granted the government authority to monitor telephone and e-mail communications. Civil libertarians and others protested this expansion of federal power. (Congress renewed the Patriot Act in 2005, with some added civil liberties safeguards.)

USA-Patriot Act Antiterrorism bill passed after the 9/11 attacks expanding government’s powers of investigation and surveillance

Further questions arose as the media reported missed clues before the 9/11 attack. Through the summer of 2001, President Bush’s daily security briefings included warnings of an al Qaeda plot to hijack a U.S. airliner. In August 2001, the FBI bungled a Minnesota flight school’s warning that a suspicious person named Zacarias Moussaoui wanted to enroll. (Later linked to the 9/11 plot, Moussaoui was arrested, tried, and sentenced to life imprisonment.)

In November 2002, Congress created a new cabinet-level agency, the **Department of Homeland Security**, which absorbed the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and other agencies. The FBI and the CIA remained independent. However, skeptics questioned whether such a bureaucratic reshuffling actually increased security.

Department of Homeland Security New cabinet-level agency created after 9/11 that was charged with domestic security responsibilities

In 2003, Bush named a bipartisan commission to examine pre-9/11 intelligence failures. Its report pinpointed communication lapses between the FBI and the CIA and urged a restructuring of U.S. intelligence operations. In 2005, Bush appointed a director of national intelligence to coordinate the government’s fifteen different intelligence agencies. Nevertheless, when the commission’s cochair was asked about homeland security in 2006, he replied: “A lot of the things we need to do . . . to

prevent another 9/11 just simply aren't being done." Critics noted, for example, that most incoming shipping containers went unchecked.

War in Iraq, 2003–2004

Although Afghanistan remained unstable and Osama bin Laden uncaptured, the administration's attention shifted elsewhere. In his January 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush identified Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "axis of evil." He especially targeted Iraq's ruler, Saddam Hussein, weakened but still in power following the 1991 Persian Gulf War. In a barrage of coordinated speeches and interviews, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, and other officials accused Saddam of complicity in the 9/11 attacks and of developing nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. The Bush administration clearly believed an invasion of Iraq was necessary and justified.

This focus on Iraq was orchestrated by a close-knit group of Republican **neoconservatives**, including Cheney, Rumsfeld, and their key aides. Throughout the Cold War, some hardliners rejected George Kennan's containment doctrine, advocating instead a policy of overwhelming U.S. military superiority and aggressive challenges to Soviet power. With the Soviet Union's collapse, neoconservatives shifted focus but continued to advocate the aggressive projection of U.S. power worldwide. Any actual or potential threat to America's global interests, they insisted,

neoconservatives Political school of thought, ascendant in the Bush administration, espousing enlarged executive powers and a unilateral approach to foreign policy

Map 31.1 Iraq

With Saddam Hussein's overthrow by U.S.-led forces in 2003, violence erupted among Iraq's ethnic and religious groups, including the majority of Shia Muslims concentrated in the south-east and the minority Sunni Muslims, who ruled the country under Saddam.

 Interactive Map



must be resisted by all available means, including preemptive military action. They felt America must primarily act alone in defense of its interests.

These neoconservatives had little patience with the “soft diplomacy” of winning hearts and minds, courting world opinion, or spreading U.S. values of democracy and freedom by example rather than by force. The point was not to negotiate with adversaries, but to defeat them. Neoconservatives attacked President Carter and President Clinton as overly preoccupied with world opinion and too reluctant to use U.S. military power. But they also criticized Republicans like the first President Bush for failing to overthrow Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf War. In the Middle East, neoconservatives focused on defending Israel, assuring the flow of oil to meet U.S. energy needs, and promoting democracy. Ending Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship, they believed, was crucial to advancing U.S. interests in the region.

George W. Bush’s election gave neoconservatives the opportunity to put their ideology into practice. The administration’s foreign policy approach came to be called the “Bush Doctrine,” which clothed neoconservatism in an aura of religious certitude. “The liberty we prize,” Bush said in his 2003 State of the Union address, “is not America’s gift to the world, it is God’s gift to humanity.” Defense Secretary Rumsfeld adorned Iraq combat reports he prepared for Bush with biblical passages proclaiming the triumph of righteousness.

Although a majority of Americans initially supported military intervention in Iraq, the action proved controversial from the outset. Critics challenged the administration to prove its claims. A preemptive war would violate U.S. principles, they charged, and could drag on for years and outrage the Muslim world. Great Britain’s Tony Blair backed the administration, but other NATO allies, along with most Arab leaders, objected.

Nevertheless, in October 2002 Congress authorized President Bush to “defend the national security . . . against the continuing threat posed by Iraq.” While Republicans supported the resolution, Democrats were divided, with some fearful of opposing a resolution Bush called vital to American security. President Bush would later use this resolution as the legal basis for invading Iraq.

Bolstered by the 2002 midterm elections, in which Republicans regained control of the Senate and increased their House majority, the administration pushed its Iraq invasion plans. On March 19, 2003, U.S. cruise missiles hit Baghdad. Two days later, U.S. and British troops invaded southern Iraq, securing the region’s oil fields and moving north (see Map 31.1). Despite unexpected guerrilla resistance, in early April U.S. troops occupied Baghdad and toppled a large statue of Saddam. As the regime fell and Saddam fled, basic municipal services collapsed and widespread looting erupted.

On May 1, aboard the aircraft carrier *Abraham Lincoln* off San Diego, a banner behind President Bush proclaimed “Mission Accomplished.” Bush named Paul Bremer, a Foreign Service officer, to administer affairs in Iraq. In December, Saddam was captured; after two trials before Iraqi judges, Saddam was convicted of human-rights abuses in genocidal attacks on Iraq’s Kurdish and Shi’ite populations. He was hanged in December 2006.

CHECKING IN

- The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were comparable to Pearl Harbor in their effect on Americans; a wave of patriotism swept the country.
- Bush proclaimed war on terrorism; a U.S.-led coalition invaded Afghanistan, routing the pro-al Qaeda Taliban government.
- The administration created a new, cabinet-level Department of Homeland Security, and Congress passed the USA-Patriot Act despite serious concerns about civil liberties.
- In 2002, reflecting the influence of neoconservatives, Bush and his advisers made the case for preemptive war against Iraq; Congress passed a resolution authorizing the use of force.
- The U.S. military operation that toppled Saddam’s regime began in March 2003 and was over by April; however, administrative missteps and other factors sparked a violent insurgency that by 2004 threatened all U.S. goals in Iraq.

But conditions in Iraq deteriorated. Iraq's Sunni Muslims, though a minority, had long dominated Iraqi politics and resented Bremer's decision to disband the Iraqi army and dismiss all government officials who had served under Saddam. The resulting power vacuum sparked sectarian violence. Conditions worsened through 2004 as bombings, kidnappings, and deadly highway blasts caused by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) occurred daily. In June, Bremer transferred power to a provisional Iraqi government, but little changed. In September, the toll of U.S. dead in Iraq passed one thousand. Vice President Cheney had predicted that the Iraqis would welcome the Americans as liberators. Now reality blasted such wishful thinking.

POLITICS AND THE ECONOMY AS A NEW CENTURY BEGINS

Beyond security concerns, what economic and social issues did Bush address in his first term?

While pursuing the post-9/11 "war on terror," the early Bush administration also proposed tax cuts and other domestic legislation reflecting its conservative ideology. However, debate over these measures unfolded amid a recession and a cascade of bankruptcies and corporate scandals.

Economic Reverses and Corporate Scandals

George W. Bush's presidency began with a short but sharp recession, led by the high-flying Silicon Valley information technology (IT) companies. An estimated 250 such businesses collapsed in a few months. As the market value of the surviving companies plummeted, instant millionaires watched their portfolios shrivel.

The recession soon spread. The stock market fell by 24 percent. Industrial production dropped; unemployment rose. By mid-2003, 2.6 million workers had lost their jobs. The Bush administration, having inherited a budget surplus, now projected years of deficits. A wave of corporate bankruptcies and scandals in the energy and telecommunications fields further eroded investor confidence. Houston's Enron Corporation, an energy company with close ties to the Bush administration, was an early casualty. In 2000, Enron ranked seventh among America's corporations. The end came with brutal swiftness in 2001 when Enron filed for bankruptcy and admitted to falsifying profit reports. More than five thousand jobless Enron workers also lost their retirement funds, consisting mostly of Enron stock. In 2006, a Houston jury convicted Enron founder Kenneth Lay and the company's CEO Jeffrey Skilling on multiple counts of fraud and conspiracy. The company's logo—a crooked "E"—seemed appropriate.

The parade continued. In 2002 WorldCom, America's second-largest telecommunications company, filed for bankruptcy after admitting that it had overstated profits by billions. CEO Bernard Ebbers, convicted of securities fraud in 2005, received a twenty-five-year prison sentence. Dennis Kozlowski, the CEO of Tyco, an industrial products and service company, was indicted for looting the company of

\$600 million, including \$2 million for his wife's birthday party on a Mediterranean island. Along with a prison sentence, Kozlowski was fined \$70 million and ordered to repay Tyco \$134 million. Declared a Wall Street investment banker: "I cannot think of a time when business . . . has been held in less repute." Responding to public anger, Congress in July 2002 imposed stricter financial reporting rules on corporations and toughened criminal penalties for business fraud.

Recovery began in 2003, stimulated by heavy consumer spending (much of it on credit) and a booming housing market. But prosperity was spotty. While the average real income of the nation's richest 1 percent increased by more than 12 percent in 2004, that of the remaining 99 percent grew by only 1.5 percent. Real wages remained flat and job creation weak. Observed economist Paul Krugman: "It's a great economy if you're a high-level corporate executive or someone who owns a lot of stock. For most other Americans, economic growth is a spectator sport." By mid-2006, even this uneven recovery faltered, and the jittery stock market again sank. The worst recession since the 1930s lay ahead.

The Republican Domestic Agenda

In February 2001, President Bush proposed \$1.6 trillion in income-tax cuts over a ten-year period. Though the measure reduced all rates, wealthy taxpayers received the highest percentage reduction. Bush argued that the cuts would stimulate investment. However, Democrats attacked the bill for favoring the rich, and warned that such deep cuts would produce even larger federal deficits. In May, Congress passed a \$1.35 trillion tax cut that was somewhat less slanted toward the rich. Mounting budget deficits predictably followed, erasing the surplus Clinton had achieved. Nevertheless, the Republican-led Congress cut taxes further in 2003 and 2005.

The administration's 2001 energy bill proposed incentives to expand coal, oil, and natural-gas production and called for drilling in Alaska's **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)**. President Bush defended the bill as a way to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil. The energy bill finally passed by Congress in August 2005 rejected the provision for drilling in ANWR. It did, however, exempt energy companies from some environmental regulations and grant \$14.5 billion in tax breaks to oil, natural gas, coal, and nuclear-power companies. It did not tighten vehicle fuel-efficiency requirements. Overall, the law pleased the energy companies that helped draft it.

Bush's education program, labeled "**No Child Left Behind**," was passed by Congress in 2001 with bipartisan support. It required states to administer standardized reading and math tests in grades four and eight. If test scores still failed to improve, schools faced the loss of federal funds as well as other penalties. Critics worried that teachers would focus too exclusively on the tested subjects. Others warned of federal intrusion in public education, which was traditionally a local matter. As test data accumulated, results proved mixed.

Reflecting Republicans' preference for private-sector solutions to social problems, the administration also supported school vouchers, by which children in poorly performing public schools could receive grants to enroll in private, mostly church-sponsored schools. However, teachers' unions criticized vouchers for draining tax dollars from the public schools. Congressional Democrats rejected Bush's

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) Vast wildlife area in Alaska in which President Bush called for oil exploration

"No Child Left Behind" Label for Bush law mandating standardized testing in reading and math in grades four and eight

call for a federally funded voucher program. Education reformers also supported charter schools, which gain exemption from many regulations governing traditional public schools in exchange for agreeing to contracts mandating specific student achievement goals. By 2009, charter schools across the nation enrolled more than a million students.

Rewarding his conservative religious supporters, Bush created an Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to funnel tax dollars to church-run social programs. Grants went to anti-abortion groups, organizations promoting teenage sexual abstinence, and evangelical prison ministries. A charity operated by televangelist Pat Robertson received \$22 million.

President Bush also pleased abortion opponents by restricting stem-cell research. Stem cells are produced during an early stage of human embryo development, and fertility clinics often have “surplus” fertilized embryos. Although stem cells are valuable for medical research, some anti-abortion groups oppose research using fertilized embryos. In 2001, Bush barred federal funding for future research involving stem cells harvested from human embryos.

Committed to a free-market ideology, Bush’s appointees throughout the federal bureaucracy reduced regulatory oversight of business and finance and weakened environmental and consumer protection laws.

Campaign Finance Reform and the Election of 2004

Reformers who deplored the role of money in politics targeted so-called soft-money contributions to political parties that then flowed on to specific candidates. In the 2000 election, soft-money contributions reached \$400 million.

Big contributors ranged from (mostly Republican) business lobbies, anti-abortion groups, and the National Rifle Association to (mostly Democratic) labor unions, trial lawyers, and teachers’ unions.

In 2002, President Bush signed a reform bill co-sponsored by Arizona Republican John McCain and Wisconsin Democrat Russell Feingold. It banned soft-money contributions, barred fake TV “issue ads” designed to influence elections, and included other provisions to reduce the power of money in politics. As big contributors sought ways around the law, its impact remained uncertain. In 2007, the Supreme Court, on First Amendment free speech grounds, restricted the law’s ban on pre-election “issue ads.” Three years later, in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, the Supreme Court struck down yet another component of the McCain-Feingold law when it ruled that corporate funding of political broadcasts cannot be limited.

As the 2004 election approached, Howard Dean, a former Vermont governor, emerged as the early frontrunner for the Democratic presidential nomination. But while Dean’s candor and antiwar position energized the Democratic base, it also alienated many voters. In the campaign’s first test, the Iowa primary, he came in a disappointing third. His candidacy quickly faded. Nevertheless, Dean tapped into growing opposition to the Iraq War and demonstrated the Internet’s political fundraising potential.

Senator **John Kerry** of Massachusetts, a decorated Vietnam War veteran, won the nomination. Democratic strategists hoped Kerry’s distinguished Vietnam War record would neutralize charges of Democratic weakness on defense. Bush and

John Kerry Senator from Massachusetts and Vietnam War veteran; Democratic nominee for president in 2004

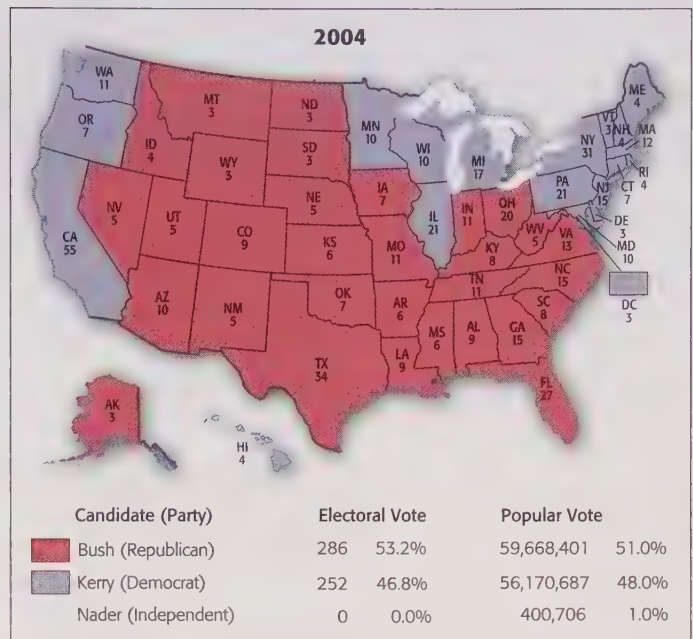
Cheney, raising some \$150 million from corporations and wealthy individual donors, again headed the Republican ticket. Although Kerry had voted for the Patriot Act and initially supported the Iraq War, he now accused Bush of misleading the nation and criticized parts of the Patriot Act as threats to civil liberties. President Bush defended both the Iraq War and the Patriot Act. Citing Kerry's changing positions, Republicans accused him of "flip-flopping" and indecisiveness. Anti-Kerry TV commercials, funded by a shadowy group called Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, questioned his Vietnam record.

The candidates' differences on abortion, the death penalty, gun control, and other issues reflected national divisions. Notably, the issue of same-sex marriage loomed large. In 2004, San Francisco's mayor challenged California law by marrying same-sex couples, and the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that banning same-sex marriage violated the state constitution's equal rights clause. The issue energized religious conservatives, who applauded Bush's call for a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. Antigay marriage referenda passed in all eleven states where the issue was on the ballot. Bush carried nine of the eleven, including Ohio, a key swing state that determined the election's outcome.


Bush won a second term, garnering 50.7 percent of the popular vote (see Map 31.2). Republicans gained a net of four Senate seats and four House seats. Bush, a tax-cutting president seen as a leader in the "war on terror" and a defender of embattled conservative cultural values, had eked out a razor-thin victory. Democrats, however, took heart from the fact that Kerry won 55 percent of voters under thirty, a growing cohort. In Illinois, a charismatic young African-American Democratic state legislator, Barack Obama, won election to the U.S. Senate.

The election highlighted the Internet's political role. During the campaign and after, MoveOn.org raised funds and mobilized e-mails and telephone calls on behalf of liberal candidates and causes. While conservative organizations had long built support through magazines, direct mail, and talk radio, liberals appeared to have the edge in Internet-based activism, especially among young people.

Conservative political groups and those on the religious right, some dating to the 1970s, remained active. But so did progressive organizations such as People for the American Way, Planned Parenthood, the Sierra Club, and Emily's List (which supported women candidates who endorsed liberal and feminist goals). Even among evangelical Christians, support for Bush was not unanimous. Jim Wallis of the evangelical Sojourners movement espoused social justice and the search for peace in his books and *Sojourners* magazine.



Map 31.2 The Election of 2004

 [Interactive Map](#)

CHECKING IN

- The September 11 attacks and the bursting of the technology-stock bubble brought the free-wheeling prosperity of the 1990s to an end.
- A spate of corporate scandals, some involving jail terms for disgraced CEOs of major companies, undermined confidence in corporate America.
- Bush and congressional Republicans passed huge tax cuts, an education bill mandating standardized testing, and an energy bill that favored oil companies.
- Cultural and religious concerns drove Republican opposition to stem-cell research and same-sex marriage.
- Stressing national security and moral issues, Bush defeated Kerry in the 2004 elections.

DEBATING IRAQ AND CONFRONTING OTHER GLOBAL CHALLENGES

What challenges faced the United States in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world after 2000?

As the Iraq conflict dragged on, home-front support eroded. Revelations of prisoner abuse, illegal spying on U.S. citizens, and serious distortions in the administration's case for invading Iraq sapped Bush's standing at home and abroad. The Israeli-Palestinian struggle, nuclear proliferation threats, and concern about global warming posed further challenges.

The Continuing Struggle in Iraq

In his second inaugural address in January 2005, Bush described the Iraq War as part of a noble campaign to "[end] tyranny in our world." In Iraq, however, conditions worsened. Sunni insurgents in Baghdad and in Sunni strongholds north of the capital battled to prevent a Shi'ite-dominated government. A November 2004 anti-insurgent operation in Fallujah involved approximately ten thousand U.S. and Iraqi forces. Typically, however, the insurgents returned after the troops withdrew. Followers of the radical Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr attacked Sunnis, GIs,



AP Photo/David Guttenfelder

Chaos in Iraq: Aftermath of the Destruction of the Imam Ali Mosque in Najaf, August 29, 2003

As Shi'ite Muslims crowded the mosque for Friday prayers, a car bomb killed at least 125 people, including a top Shi'ite religious leader, and destroyed one of Shia Islam's holiest shrines.

journalists, and foreign contractors alike. Muslim militants from elsewhere, attracted by the U.S. presence and calling themselves al Qaeda in Mesopotamia (the region's ancient name), added to the unrest.

Despite billions in U.S. funds, reconstruction lagged, and basic municipal services remained unpredictable. A subsidiary of the Halliburton Company, once headed by Vice President Cheney, with \$3.6 billion in no-bid reconstruction contracts, faced accusations of fraud. Oil exports, vital to Iraq's economy, remained below prewar levels.

Political progress proved equally difficult. Sunnis boycotted a January 2005 election, resulting in a Shi'ite-dominated National Assembly. The prime minister came from a religious party with links to Moqtada al-Sadr. Sunnis accused Shi'ite militias and Interior Ministry "death squads" of kidnapping and killing Sunni leaders and detonating car bombs in Sunni neighborhoods. In February 2006, suicide bombers destroyed the revered Golden Dome Shi'ite mosque in Samarra, dating to 944 C.E., triggering anti-Sunni reprisal attacks. (The Kurds in northern Iraq, hoping for an independent Kurdish state, remained aloof from the Sunni-Shi'ite sectarian violence.)

As thousands of refugees fled Iraq or sheltered in makeshift camps, an Iraqi leader lamented: "If this is not civil war, then God knows what civil war is." In April 2006, a new Shi'ite prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, urged "national reconciliation," but the chaos continued. As other coalition forces withdrew, the United States bore the brunt of anti-insurgency fighting.

Sagging Support at Home

Under these circumstances, American public opinion turned decisively against the war. In November 2005, Pennsylvania Democratic congressman Jack Murtha urged immediate withdrawal from Iraq. A decorated Vietnam War veteran, Murtha initially supported the war but now labeled it "a flawed policy, wrapped in an illusion." Even conservative writer William Buckley bluntly declared: "[T]he American objective in Iraq has failed."

The popular culture mirrored the nation's divisions. Michael Moore's anti-Bush satirical documentary *Fahrenheit 9/11* packed movie theaters in 2004. Singers including Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young, Ani DiFranco, and the Dixie Chicks expressed opposition to the administration's policies. Despite these protests, conservative media voices such as radio personality Rush Limbaugh, as well as Bill O'Reilly and other commentators on Rupert Murdoch's Fox News TV channel, supported the president. Bush supporters also posted Internet lists urging boycotts of scores of Hollywood stars who vocally opposed Bush and the Iraq War. In an already polarized climate, Bush's foreign and domestic policies further divided America.

Under critical scrutiny, the administration's arguments for invading Iraq—Saddam Hussein's alleged WMD program and his connections to the 9/11 attacks—crumbled. After the invasion, investigators found no WMDs. A Senate inquiry found that Vice President Cheney and other administration officials pressured the CIA to focus on intelligence supporting their case while ignoring contradictory data. Furthermore, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's prewar assurances that a small U.S. force equipped with high-tech weaponry would achieve quick victory proved tragically wrong.

Shocking evidence of prisoner mistreatment deepened home-front uneasiness. In 2004, photographs surfaced showing the abuse and sexual humiliation of Iraqis held by U.S. forces at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison. Further evidence soon revealed a broader pattern of prisoner abuse, including at Guantánamo, where more than five hundred prisoners from Afghanistan were held without trial. Critics denounced as torture the interrogation techniques used at Guantánamo, including "water boarding," in which the victim is nearly drowned. Evidence also surfaced that the CIA had secretly flown some detainees to an uncertain fate in Egyptian and Eastern European prisons. In a secret 2002 memo, Justice Department lawyer John Yoo argued that the Geneva Conventions protecting prisoners of war did not apply to persons the president designated as "enemy combatants."

In 2005, Congress passed legislation proposed by Senator John McCain forbidding "cruel, inhuman, and degrading" treatment of prisoners. McCain himself had been tortured as a POW in Vietnam. Bush signed the bill, but issued a "signing statement" asserting, in effect, that he was not bound to obey it. This was one of many such pronouncements by which the president "interpreted" bills he was signing, even though the Constitution gave the president no authority to interpret laws as he chose.

Americans also learned in 2005 that President Bush in 2002 had secretly authorized the National Security Agency (NSA), a government body created in 1952, to tap U.S. citizens' overseas phone calls and e-mails without securing a warrant as required by law. Evidence also surfaced that the NSA, in addition to tapping foreign phone calls and e-mails, had tapped domestic ones as well and that the FBI had targeted peace groups and journalists for surveillance. These invasions of privacy disturbed not only the American Civil Liberties Union, but many ordinary citizens as well. For example, the American Library Association protested legislation permitting investigators to access library patrons' records of book borrowing and Internet use.

In *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld* (2004), the Supreme Court addressed the Bush administration's claim that "enemy combatants" could be held indefinitely. Eight of the justices agreed that such practices violated a prisoner's Fifth Amendment right to due process. In response to criticism, the Bush administration set up special military tribunals, not bound by the customary rules of courtroom procedure, to try the Guantánamo prisoners. In 2006, the Supreme Court rejected this approach, however, ruling that such tribunals violated both the Constitution and the Geneva Conventions.

In March 2006, *Time* magazine reported that, in November 2005, U.S. marines killed twenty-four unarmed Iraqi men, women, and children after a roadside IED killed one of their unit. As this and other atrocities came to light, memories of the Vietnam-era massacre at My Lai stirred uneasily. Amid a cascade of disturbing news, the reputation not only of the Bush administration but of America itself suffered.

The Bush Administration and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Central to U.S.-Muslim relations was America's support for Israel and Washington's response to Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. This issue also complicated America's relations with its European allies, many of which supported the Palestinian cause. On this issue,

the Bush administration accomplished little. As the Palestinian intifada (uprising) continued, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon demanded an end to the violence before resuming talks, while Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat insisted that protests would continue so long as Israel fostered Jewish settlements in Palestinian territory. In 2002, Israel began a security barrier, partially extending into the West Bank, to control access and prevent suicide attacks.

The Bush administration proposed a so-called “road map to peace” in 2003, but it did not push the initiative, and little changed. In 2005, Israel withdrew Jewish settlements from Gaza, but in January 2006 Palestinian elections gave victory to the radical Hamas organization, which condoned attacks on Israel and even denied Israel’s right to exist.

Meanwhile, Hezbollah, a militant Lebanon-based Shi’ite organization supported by Iran and Syria, killed or kidnapped several Israeli soldiers and lobbed rockets into northern Israel. In retaliation, Israel invaded Lebanon in July 2006 and bombed not only Hezbollah bases but also bridges, highways, and Beirut’s airport, causing heavy casualties and property damage. The Israelis soon withdrew, however, leaving Hezbollah intact and claiming victory. As Hamas militants in Gaza fired rockets into border towns, Israel in December 2008 launched a full-scale air and ground assault on Gaza. Over thirteen hundred Gazans died. The Israelis withdrew after three weeks, leaving Hamas in power and the underlying conflict no nearer to solution.

In eight years, the Bush administration did little to push the negotiations that offered the only prospect of resolving a contentious struggle that jeopardized Israel’s security, damaged U.S. interests in the region and beyond, and left the Palestinians demoralized and impoverished.

America Confronts Growing Nuclear Threats

The danger of nuclear proliferation, a grave world threat, worsened in these years. Impoverished and isolated North Korea, ruled by an eccentric dictator, Kim Jong Il, withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and in

2006 tested both a long-range missile and a nuclear weapon. Stop-and-start negotiations appeared to make some progress, but North Korea exploded an even more powerful bomb in May 2009 and fired more missiles, stirring alarmed protests from many nations, including the United States.

Iran, meanwhile, pursued a uranium-enrichment program, allegedly for nuclear-power development. Under UN pressure, Iran suspended this program in 2004 but resumed it in 2006 after the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (**AH-mu-din-a-JOD**) as president. An Islamic fundamentalist, Ahmadinejad taunted America, called the Holocaust a myth, and denied Israel’s right to exist. An Iranian long-range missile test in May 2009 deepened uneasiness about its intentions.

Citing these threats, the Bush administration spent billions on a ground-based version of President Reagan’s missile-defense system (see Chapter 30). Although this program violated the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, in 2002 the United States and Russia allowed the ABM treaty to lapse. However, Russian president Vladimir Putin vigorously opposed the administration’s plans to build radar facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic as part of its missile-defense program.

In 2006, President Bush agreed to provide fuel and parts for India's nuclear-power reactors even though India refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and barred UN inspectors from its nuclear weapons facilities. Critics warned that this would encourage other nations to pursue nuclear weapons programs. Meanwhile, political instability in Pakistan, a nuclear power, intensified fears of deepening nuclear dangers stalking the world.

A Widening Trade Gap and China's Rising Economic Power

The 2007 U.S. trade deficit approached \$800 billion. This massive imbalance mainly reflected imports of oil, automobiles (mostly Japanese), and consumer goods from China. The 2007 trade deficit with China alone surged to \$256 billion.

U.S. manufacturers complained that China artificially manipulated its currency, the yuan, to make Chinese exports cheaper. However, big-box discounters welcomed low-priced Chinese imports. When U.S. textile manufacturers pressured President Bush to impose quotas on clothing imported from China, Wal-Mart and other discount chains fought the effort.

China's 2007 gross domestic product (GDP) of \$7 trillion ranked second in the world, after the United States. Some economists predicted that China's GDP would surpass America's in twenty years. For China to sustain its growth and provide a higher living standard for its people, the U.S. market was crucial. Critics targeted China's repressive regime, poor quality control on export goods, and massive greenhouse gas emissions. (As host of the 2008 Olympic Games, China did reduce Beijing's notorious air pollution, at least temporarily.)

Environmental Hazards Become a Global Concern

Three Mile Island, Love Canal, and the Exxon Valdez disaster (see Chapters 29 and 30) underscored modern technology's environmental risks. Acid rain carrying pollutants from U.S. factories and vehicle emissions damaged Appalachian forests and Canadian lakes. As fluorocarbons from aerosol cans, air conditioners, and other sources depleted the atmosphere's protective ozone layer, increased solar radiation posed skin cancer risks. A 1986 nuclear-power plant explosion at Chernobyl in the Ukraine and the near-meltdown of the Fukushima nuclear-power facility in Japan (caused by a devastating tsunami) in 2011 highlighted the global scope of these risks.

Environmental hazards included the problem of radioactive waste disposal. In 2002, President Bush designated Nevada's Yucca Mountain as the storage site for nuclear wastes that will remain deadly for thousands of years. But as Nevada politicians protested and scientists warned of seismic activity and water seepage in the area, the project stalled. Meanwhile, dangerous byproducts of aging nuclear-power plants accumulated in temporary sites across the nation.

Above all, **global warming** loomed as a grave threat. The United States, with less than 5 percent of the world's population, accounted for 25 percent of global energy consumption, primarily from fossil fuels widely viewed as contributing to global warming. A 2005 EPA study found significant increases in average U.S. motor vehicles'

global warming Worldwide surge in average temperatures most scientists attributed to greenhouse-gas emissions

emissions since 1980. Despite mounting evidence, however, the Bush administration downplayed the environmental impact of fossil fuel consumption. The administration rejected calls for stricter emissions standards, weakened enforcement of existing regulations, and marginalized government scientists who questioned its policies.

A 1997 UN conference on global warming held in Kyoto, Japan, set strict emission targets for industrialized nations. President Clinton signed the **Kyoto Accords** but did not submit the document for Senate ratification, fearing defeat. President Bush repudiated the agreement entirely, on the grounds that it would hurt the U.S. economy. Another conference in Copenhagen in 2009, under the administration of President Barack Obama, also failed to produce a binding worldwide agreement. A 2009 House bill to cap carbon emissions and set up a system to let private industry buy and sell carbon credits (“cap and trade”) failed in the Senate. In April 2010, the Deepwater Horizon, a huge oil rig leased to BP, exploded and burned, killing eleven workers and fouling the Gulf of Mexico with over 200 million gallons of oil. It was the most devastating oil spill in American history. But even this disaster had no apparent effect on U.S. energy policy or usage, which continued to depend heavily on fossil fuels.

Hollywood filmmakers both reflected and contributed to global-warming fears. In *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), a scientist (Dennis Quaid) tries desperately to warn the world of impending disaster and to save his son as the Atlantic engulfs New York City. Al Gore’s Academy-Award-winning film *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006) further documented the dangers of global warming. (In 2007, Gore, along with a panel of UN climate scientists, received the Nobel Peace Prize for promoting awareness of global warming.) While such popular culture productions heightened public awareness of global warming, critics charged that they exploited the issue while wildly distorting the actual risks.

Kyoto Accords Agreement reached by most industrial nations, with the exception of the United States and several others, to reduce carbon emissions

CHECKING IN

- Violence in Iraq increased between 2004 and 2006 into a melee of violence, slowing political and economic progress.
- The “surge” of troops in 2007 improved security conditions somewhat, but American opinion had turned against the war, and Bush’s approval ratings plummeted.
- The abuse of prisoners and denial of basic rights to “enemy combatants” prompted mounting criticism, as did revelations about a warrantless domestic spying program.
- Israel-Palestinian relations remained tense; in 2006, Israel invaded Lebanon in an effort to root out Hezbollah.
- Nuclear proliferation became a focus of the administration’s attention, while the trade deficit with China widened and global warming concerns intensified.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRENDS IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA

What demographic and economic trends have most shaped contemporary America?

As a new century began, long-term population shifts to the South and West as well as continued immigration from Asia and Latin America, in addition to other developments, brought significant changes to U.S. society. Profound economic changes benefited some but disadvantaged others, including inner-city residents and displaced industrial workers, widening the economic gap between those at the top and the rest of society.

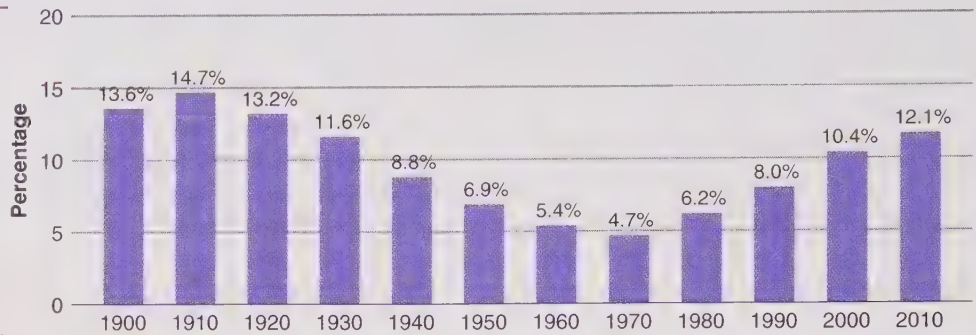
An Increasingly Diverse People

Americans have long been a people on the move, and this mobility continues. Between 1990 and 2010, the West’s population increased by 19.1 million. The South expanded

Figure 31.1 Foreign-Born as a Percentage of U.S. Population, 1900–2010

After gradually declining from a peak of nearly 15 percent in 1910 to under 5 percent in 1970, the proportion of the U.S. population that is foreign-born again began to rise.

Source: Bureau of Census, U.S. Dept. of Commerce.



by more than 29 million in the same period. Across the Midwest and Great Plains, by contrast, populations remained stable. In contrast, the population of Michigan actually declined between 2000 and 2010.

Household arrangements changed as well. The proportion of “traditional” families headed by a married heterosexual couple fell from 74 percent in 1960 to under 50 percent by 2007.

Heavy immigration from Asia and Latin America reversed a long decline in the proportion of foreign-born persons in the population. From a low of about 5 percent in 1970, this figure was about 12 percent in 2010 (see Figure 31.1). The 2010 U.S. population of more than 308 million was about 16 percent Hispanic, 12 percent black, 5 percent Asian, and 1 percent American Indian. The nation’s Hispanics—nearly 60 percent of Mexican origin, with Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Salvadorans comprising most of the balance—are predicted to make up 25 percent of the population by 2050. Some 6 million Muslims, mainly from the Middle East and North Africa, add to the ethno-religious mix.

These demographic changes offer more than an interesting snapshot of contemporary American society. They have far-reaching political, economic, and cultural implications and offer a preview of a dynamic future nation very different from that of yesterday or today.

Upward Mobility and Social Problems in a Multiethnic Society

African-American median household income in 2007 approached \$35,000. Although below the national median of around \$50,700, this represented a substantial gain, in constant dollars, since 1990. College-educated blacks enjoyed significantly higher earnings, and 57 percent of black high school graduates in 2005 went on to college. TV’s long-running *The Cosby Show* (1984–1992), starring Bill Cosby as an obstetrician and his wife (Phylicia Rashad) as an attorney, offered a fictional version of this upwardly mobile group of African-Americans.

But many inner-city blacks confronted a different reality, including bleak job prospects, poor schools, and drug-related crime. The black unemployment rate of nearly 15 percent in early 2011 (already well above the national rate) was far higher among high school dropouts and youths lacking a college education. Prison statistics for ill-educated young black males, often involving drug-related offenses, were similarly bleak.

Inner-city black women faced the risks of drug use, HIV/AIDS infection, and out-of-wedlock pregnancy. In 2006, more than 70 percent of black births were to unmarried women, almost twice the percentage in 1970. Many of these unmarried mothers were teenagers, reducing their prospects for education and employment. (Out-of-wedlock births to white women also rose, but at a far lower rate.)

Among Native Americans, renewed tribal pride and activism continued, including federal lawsuits to enforce long-ignored Indian treaties. Tribal gambling casinos, approved by Congress in 1988, proliferated. By 2008, about four hundred casinos generated more than \$18 billion in annual income. Some tribal leaders lamented the social problems casinos sometimes brought in their wake, but casino income did help fund tribal schools, museums, job training, and substance-abuse programs.

The Hispanic population resisted sweeping generalizations. While Mexican-Americans concentrated in the Southwest, many lived elsewhere. Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Haitians (mostly of African origin) resided mainly in Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois.

Hispanic households' median income neared \$40,000 by 2008, and unemployment among Hispanics dropped from 9 percent in 1995 to 5.6 percent in 2007. However, in 2007, 21.5 percent lived in poverty, many in troubled inner-city neighborhoods. Religion and family loomed large in Hispanic culture, but stressful social conditions took their toll.

In 2007, more than five thousand Hispanics held elective public office, including Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. Ten million Hispanics streamed to the polls in 2008, making them an increasingly important constituency. In 2009, while filling a Supreme Court vacancy, President Barack Obama nominated Sonia Sotomayor, a U.S. district court judge of Puerto Rican descent. Born in New York City, Sotomayor was reared by her mother after her father's death and went on to



Americanization, Twenty-First-Century Style

Recent immigrants from Afghanistan join a fitness class in Fremont, California, in 2001.

compile a brilliant college and law school record. Despite some controversy, she won Senate confirmation by a 68–31 vote.

Of the nation's 14.6 million Asian-Americans in 2010, more than 75 percent had arrived since 1980. Prizing education and supported by family networks, many followed a trajectory of academic achievement and upward mobility. Nearly 50 percent of adult Asian-Americans held college degrees; among high school graduates, the college enrollment rate neared 90 percent.

Demographers predict, based on baby-boom mortality and comparative fertility rates, that by 2050 non-Hispanic whites will constitute only about half the U.S. population. Non-Hispanic whites, while still a plurality, will simply be another minority. Many Americans of mixed origins, like the golfer Tiger Woods, of Thai, Chinese, African-American, and American Indian ancestry, resist being pigeonholed. From 1970 to 2005, the number of black-white married couples in the United States rose from 65,000 to 422,000. Recognizing these realities, the Census Bureau now permits

citizens to check more than one racial category, or none at all.

With the graying of the baby-boom generation, America is also aging. In 2007, the highest-circulation U.S. magazine was *AARP*, read by 24 million members of the American Association of Retired Persons. The proportion of Americans over sixty-five, about 13 percent in 2009, is projected to reach 20 percent by 2050—a statistic with profound implications for health care, social security and Medicare funding, and other economic and social issues.

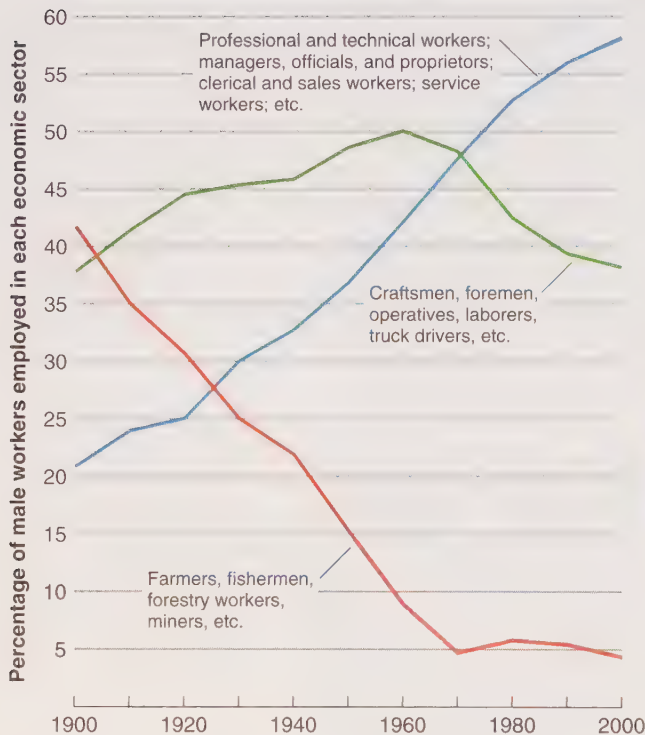


Figure 31.2 Changing Patterns of Work, 1900–2000

This chart illustrates the sweeping changes in the U.S. labor force in the twentieth century. The proportion of male workers in farming, fishing, forestry, and mining fell dramatically. The percentage of workers in industry and related occupations climbed until about 1960, and then began to decline. The service, technical, and professional categories rose steadily throughout the century.

Sources: *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970* (1975); *Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2002*; Caplow, Hicks, and Wattenberg, *The First Measured Century: An Illustrated Guide to Trends in America* (Washington, DC: The AEI Press, 2001).

The “New Economy” and the Old Economy

In the early twentieth century, industrial production replaced agriculture as America's economic engine. The century's end saw an equally profound transformation: the rise of a professional and service-based economy (see Figure 31.2). Farming and manufacturing continued, of course, but with far fewer workers.

In the U.S. work force of 146 million in 2007, about 60 percent held white-collar jobs, ranging from sales clerks, office workers, and teachers to physicians, lawyers, engineers, computer programmers, and business executives. Service-sector employees in health care, custodial work, restaurants, and so forth accounted for another 16 percent. Only 23 percent worked in manual-labor fields such as manufacturing, farming, construction, trucking, and so on.

This transformation had mixed effects. Young people with education, skills, and contacts did well in the new electronics, programming, and

telecommunications fields and in the burgeoning corporate and financial services sectors. For others, supermarkets, car washes, fast-food outlets, and discount supermarkets provided entry-level jobs, but few long-term prospects.

The computer-based information revolution has had economic ramifications as well. Newspaper circulation fell about 35 percent between 1985 and 2010. Even venerable papers such as the *New York Times* and newsmagazines like *Newsweek* faced problems as Americans turned to TV or online news sources—which for some meant Jon Stewart’s satirical TV program, *The Daily Show*. (In 2010, *Newsweek* was obliged to merge with an online news service, *The Daily Beast*.) The new technologies impacted the music industry as well. CD sales peaked in 2000, but then dropped precipitously as fans downloaded albums and songs electronically far more cheaply to their laptops or iPods.

The economic transformation summed up by the term “globalization” complicated all these changes. America’s economy has long been enmeshed in transnational patterns of trade and investment, of course, but this involvement has vastly accelerated in recent decades. Today’s large corporations and financial institutions are all global in scope. Thanks to regional trading blocs such as NAFTA and multinational agreements administered by the **World Trade Organization (WTO)**, the production and marketing of goods now largely ignores national boundaries. The flow of capital among financial institutions is similarly global in scope.

The economic well-being of all Americans increasingly depends on developments beyond the nation’s borders. As imports replace American-made products and U.S. manufacturers shift operations overseas to cut labor costs, displaced workers face unemployment or lower-wage service-sector jobs. Union membership by 2007 sank to only 12 percent of the labor force, leaving workers even more vulnerable. The recession that hit in 2008 worsened the impact of these longer-term trends.

The decline of the U.S. auto industry typifies the pattern. After losing sales because of rising gasoline prices in the 1970s (see Chapter 29), American carmakers returned to profitability with gas-guzzling SUVs and light trucks. But as gas prices again spiked upward after 2000, car buyers turned to more fuel-efficient imports, particularly Japan’s Toyota, Honda, and Nissan brands. By mid-2007, foreign carmakers had captured over half the U.S. market—a historic first.

At GM, a century-old icon of America’s industrial might, annual losses spurted to nearly \$39 billion in 2008. GM’s stock price tumbled, and the company shed tens of thousands of jobs. From 2005 through mid-2008, GM, Chrysler, and Ford eliminated nearly 150,000 jobs and closed thirty-five plants, causing pain across America. Between 2008 and 2010, facing plunging sales and a yawning deficit, GM closed more factories, shuttered several of its oldest brands, and accepted billions of dollars in a government bailout. Chrysler was saved from destruction when it was purchased by Italian carmaker Fiat.

Economists continued to defend globalization as beneficial for America overall, as it lowered consumer prices and opened world markets for U.S. exports. But for displaced workers, this was cold comfort. In addition to the impact on U.S. industrial workers, human rights activists charged that corporations in a “race to the bottom” open factories in poor

World Trade Organization (WTO) World body governing international trade

CHECKING IN

- The Sun Belt continued to grow, and immigration led to growing diversity.
- Racial problems continued, especially in urban ghettos; Native Americans asserted their treaty rights and built casinos; Hispanic and Asian communities grew dramatically.
- Acceptance of mixed-race celebrities and increasing incidence of interracial marriage hinted at a movement away from fixed notions of race.
- As the population grew increasingly diverse ethnically, the “melting pot” metaphor suggesting sameness and uniformity faded.
- The service economy expanded rapidly, pushing many into low-paying jobs but creating lucrative jobs for the educated; labor unions shrank.

countries where workers live in prison-like barracks and work long hours for low wages. Such factories often are environmental polluters as well.

Amid economic worries and a “war on terror,” post-9/11 popular culture reflected crosscurrents of anxiety and escapism. Rupert Murdoch’s Fox TV networks, while rallying support for Bush on the Fox News Channel, also offered the top-rated *American Idol* program, in which amateur vocalists competed for audience votes. Such shows, along with the contrived scenarios of so-called “reality” programs and elaborately plotted video games, provided distraction from the stress of contemporary life. A longing to obliterate shadowy enemies perhaps contributed to the success of fantasy movies such as *Iron Man* (2008) and *Avatar* (2009), in which technologically enhanced superheroes battled menacing foes.

A FLOUNDERING ADMINISTRATION YIELDS TO A RENEWED VISION

What were the most pressing domestic issues after 2004?

President Bush’s second term brought multiple setbacks, including the administration’s ineffectual response to a devastating hurricane. Two Supreme Court appointments extended Bush’s conservative legacy, but lobbying scandals, soaring federal deficits, and discontent with his domestic and foreign policies, capped by a severe recession, all eroded Bush’s standing. The watershed 2008 election suggested a renewed national resolve to fulfill the enduring vision of what America might yet become.

Mixed Record, Mounting Deficits, and Disaster in New Orleans

In 2003, Congress enacted Bush’s proposal to pay part of seniors’ prescription drug expenses under the federal Medicare program. Though older citizens welcomed the help in paying for their medications, many grumbled as they battled the red tape. Democrats charged that the plan mainly benefited drug firms and insurance companies.

The prescription drug benefit helped push the government’s share of Medicare costs to \$179 billion in 2007, more than five times the 1990 figure. Medicare and social security costs, plus Bush’s tax cuts, the Iraq and Afghan wars, and interest payments on the national debt, produced yawning federal deficits from 2002 on. Worsening the problem, Congress members of both parties continued the time-honored practice of quietly inserting into spending bills pet projects known as “earmarks” that benefited their districts.

Launching his second term, Bush proposed a partial privatization of social security, called the New Deal pension program. The social security system faced severe budgetary strains as the baby-boom generation grew older. Under Bush’s plan, people could shift some of their social security funds to private investment accounts. However, the proposal failed to win acceptance. Most citizens preferred a government program to the uncertainties of the market.

The administration stumbled over immigration policy. Of the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the United States, many worked in a low-wage



Michael Almsworth/Dallas Morning News/Corbis News/Corbis

New Orleans in the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, September 1, 2005

Four days after the city's levees burst and flood waters devastated their homes, New Orleans residents awaited evacuation to the Superdome, which quickly became a scene of nightmarish conditions as thousands of desperate people crowded in.

“shadow economy” as farm laborers, motel cleaners, nursing-home attendants, or employees in food-processing plants. In 2005, the administration proposed a bill by which these workers could eventually gain legal status. The debate that erupted revealed deep divisions in U.S. public opinion and within Bush's own party. Businesses employing immigrants supported the bill, but opponents denounced the plan as “amnesty” for lawbreakers. Deport them, they argued, and the law of supply-and-demand would push up wages for the jobs they held, increasing opportunities for U.S.-born workers.

Late in 2005, the House of Representatives, with strong Republican support, defied the administration by passing a tough immigration bill criminalizing illegal aliens and requiring their deportation; strengthening the U.S.-Mexican border; and making it a felony for anyone, including ministers and health-care providers, to help undocumented immigrants.

The reaction was swift. Protesters, supported by Spanish-language radio and TV, marched in Los Angeles and other cities. The bill's supporters mobilized as well.

Radio personality Rush Limbaugh angrily denounced the marches. In the Southwest, volunteers organized a vigilante-like “Minuteman Project” to patrol the border. With the Hispanic vote in play, politicians proceeded cautiously. Defying the White House, a bloc of Senate Republicans defeated the compromise bill.

Shelving hopes for reform, the Bush administration cracked down on illegal immigration. In 2006, Bush signed a bill to build a 700-mile reinforced fence along the U.S.-Mexican border. In addition, federal agents raided plants employing undocumented Hispanics. While some applauded the administration’s harsh policies, humanitarian and civil-rights groups protested, noting the impact on children and disrupted families. A 2008 film, *The Visitor*, portrayed the human consequences of rigidly enforced deportation policies.

Hurricane Katrina Worst natural disaster in U.S. history; destroyed much of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast in August 2005

The administration took another hit in August 2005, when **Hurricane Katrina** struck the Gulf Coast, taking as many as fourteen hundred lives, inflicting heavy property damage, disrupting shipping on the Mississippi River, and smashing oil refineries and offshore oil rigs. New Orleans suffered most. As New Orleans’ levees burst under Katrina’s storm surge, rampaging water flooded the lower wards, populated mainly by poor blacks. Many residents drowned or died awaiting rescue. Others lost homes and possessions. Thousands poured into New Orleans’s Superdome, which soon became a squalid disaster zone.

Washington’s response was appallingly inadequate. FEMA head Michael Brown, a political appointee with no disaster experience, proved hopelessly inept. Though praised by Bush, he soon resigned. The distribution of emergency relief funds involved massive fraud and ineptitude. FEMA spent \$900 million on twenty-six thousand mobile homes, many of which sat unused. Despite the reorganization of the national security bureaucracy after 9/11, Hurricane Katrina revealed the same pattern of missed warnings, failed communication, and bumbling response. Many blamed Washington as New Orleans neighborhoods stood silent, their streets lined with empty, mud-caked houses, their residents scattered.

Extending Republican Influence: From the Supreme Court to K Street

In July 2005, Supreme Court justice Sandra Day O’Connor, a key swing vote in close decisions, announced her retirement. To replace her, Bush nominated federal judge John Roberts, who had held posts in the Reagan administration. When Chief Justice Rehnquist died in September, Bush nominated Roberts as chief justice. He won easy Senate confirmation while revealing little about his judicial philosophy.

To fill the second vacancy, Bush nominated Samuel Alito, Jr. As a Justice Department lawyer in the Reagan administration, and later as a federal judge, Alito had espoused the broad view of executive powers that the Bush administration used to justify its post-9/11 actions at home and abroad. Alito won confirmation, 58–42.

With Roberts and Alito joining Scalia and Thomas as a bloc of four reliably conservative justices, Justice Anthony Kennedy emerged as the swing vote in close decisions. Pro-choice advocates feared (and abortion opponents hoped) that the high court’s growing conservative strength would threaten *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 ruling upholding abortion rights. Although it remained highly contentious, opinion polls showed broad support for *Roe v. Wade*. In *Gonzales v. Carhart* (2007),

the Supreme Court, on a 5–4 vote, upheld a 2003 congressional ban on late-term abortions. In the decision, however, the majority cited *Roe v. Wade* as a guiding precedent, thus implicitly reaffirming that ruling.

As Supreme Court politics attracted notice, so did the influence of Washington lobbyists. Long a part of American politics, lobbyists' influence increased during the ascendancy of Texas Republican congressman Tom DeLay, who became House majority leader in 2003. From 2000 to 2005, the ranks of registered Washington lobbyists expanded from around fifteen thousand to nearly thirty-three thousand, with many more unregistered ones. DeLay extracted campaign contributions from lobbyists and pressured them to hire Republican staffers—often members of legislators' families.

An eruption of scandals in 2005 focused attention on lobbyists and money's role in politics. In September, DeLay resigned as majority leader, and soon left Congress altogether, after a grand jury indicted him for violating Texas election laws by engineering a redistricting scheme that benefited Republicans. In December, a federal grand jury indicted Jack Abramoff, a Washington lobbyist with ties to DeLay. Abramoff had collected millions from corporations trying to influence legislation, including \$82 million from Indian tribes seeking casino licenses or to prevent rival tribes from getting licenses. Pleading guilty, Abramoff went to prison. As public disgust mounted, politicians scrambled to return tainted contributions and regulate lobbyists more strictly.

A Shifting Political Landscape: The 2006 Election and Beyond

In the 2006 midterm election, voters rendered a stinging judgment on the Bush administration and the Republican-led Congress. Even President Bush admitted that his party had taken a “thumping.” Democrats gained thirty-two House seats, retaking control for the first time in twelve years. Democrats also narrowly won control of the Senate, 51 to 49. The number of women senators rose to sixteen, a record high. The Democratic victories brought new congressional leadership, including Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco as Speaker of the House, the first woman to hold that post. The election results signaled discontent with the nation's direction, and especially over the Iraq War. Consequently, President Bush fired Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. Vice President Cheney's influence diminished as well.

By the end of 2007, more than four thousand GIs had been killed in Iraq. After five years, the war's costs had soared to around \$600 billion, with billions more projected. Advised by General David Petraeus, the new commander in Iraq, Bush ordered more troops to Iraq in 2007. With additional GIs patrolling Baghdad and other trouble spots, violence declined. An uneasy cease-fire by Shi'ite militias helped as well. Assassinations, suicide bombings, and IED attacks continued, but U.S. military deaths in Iraq for 2008 fell to 314, down sharply from previous years. In November 2008, the Iraqi parliament ratified an agreement with Washington for the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from urban centers by mid-2009. The conflict, already longer than World War II, was winding down at last.

Despite Bush's claim that Saddam Hussein's overthrow justified the war, most Americans continued to view it as a mistake. A Taliban resurgence in Afghanistan strengthened this view. Reports of poor care in veterans' hospitals, delays in

processing wounded veterans' claims, and massive fraud in the Iraq reconstruction program deepened public anger over the war.

Other controversies plagued Bush's final years in office. In March 2007, Vice President Cheney's chief of staff went to prison after his conviction for perjury and obstruction of justice. In August 2007, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales resigned amid an uproar over the hiring and firing of U.S. attorneys and Justice Department lawyers for blatantly political reasons. Gonzales' approval of the Justice Department's "torture memo" and of illegal FBI spying during his tenure as White House counsel added to the firestorm of criticism.

As Bush's presidency wound down, his approval ratings sank to around 25 percent—close to the lowest ever recorded for any president. What caused this reversal? Beyond the unpopular Iraq War and related issues of torture, unlimited detention, and violations of citizens' rights, many saw an arrogant, go-it-alone approach that damaged America's standing worldwide. Critics also targeted the administration's dismissal of scientific evidence on global warming, the politicization of the Justice Department and other federal agencies, and the secretive power exercised by Vice President Cheney and a small circle of like-minded advisers. To his opponents, Bush's black-and-white worldview and preference for snap decisions based on gut instincts further limited his effectiveness.

The Economist, a respected London-based magazine that endorsed Bush in 2000, reached a harsh judgment as his term ended: "He leaves the White House as one of the least popular and most divisive presidents in American history, . . . [and] the most partisan . . . in living memory. . . . Both the country and, ultimately, the Republican Party are left the worse for it."

Millions of Americans continued to support Bush, of course. The Iraq invasion, tax cuts, educational reforms, promotion of international trade, and free-market suspicion of government regulation all had their admirers. Bush himself defended his record, insisting that even his most controversial post-9/11 actions aimed to protect the country from terrorists. The Republican Party retained a large core of loyal supporters. For the moment, however, the party's fortunes stood at a low ebb.

Recession Strikes the U.S. and World Economies

Deepening the national malaise, a recession began in 2007 and quickly worsened. The downturn started in the real estate market. Beginning in the late 1990s, housing prices spiked upward, especially in California, Florida, the Southwest, and the Northeast. The bubble burst in 2007. As real estate prices tumbled, homebuilding and commercial developments stalled.

The crisis soon spread, worsened by lax governmental regulation. In 1999, Congress repealed the Glass-Steagall Act, a 1933 law designed to regulate bank practices and protect depositors. Freed of regulatory constraints, investment banks could now acquire unregulated financial services companies and indulge in other forms of financial wheeling and dealing. During the real estate boom, using slogans like "No credit? No problem," banks and lending companies extended mortgages to homebuyers who could barely afford them. By 2008, nearly 30 percent of all mortgages were rated as "subprime." These risky mortgages were then sold to Wall Street

investment banks or other financial institutions that bundled or “securitized” them into stock offerings purchased by investors.

In 2007, it was revealed that billions of dollars of these securities were practically worthless. The resulting credit crisis spooked the financial markets and popped the housing bubble. Rising housing prices had subsidized the American consumer’s spending habits since 2001. Now, reports of flat or falling home prices stoked fears of a recession. Worse still, a combination of geopolitical fears and oil speculation drove gas prices above \$4 per gallon, the highest ever and more than double the price when George Bush and Dick Cheney—two former oil company executives—took office.

Frustration with the status quo boiled over in the early stages of the 2008 presidential election. Out of a crowded field of contenders, voters in the Republican primaries and caucuses selected Senator John McCain of Arizona to run in the November general election. McCain’s plainspoken directness and reputation as a maverick were well suited to a restless electorate. McCain had also criticized Bush’s handling of the war in Iraq and advocated sending more U.S. troops into the conflict.

The antiestablishment sentiment was even stronger on the Democratic side. In a hotly contested race, Democratic primary voters rejected two well-known names—Senator John Edwards, who ran for vice president in 2004, and Senator Hillary Clinton, wife of former president Bill Clinton—in favor of a relatively unknown, forty-six-year-old, African-American senator from Illinois, **Barack Obama**. Although little separated the three candidates on the issues, Obama’s opposition to the Iraq War, spellbinding oratory, and calls for change jibed well with the mood of Democratic voters.

The nominees for president formed a study in contrasts. On one side was the energetic and patriotic McCain, seventy-two years of age, a Navy veteran with twenty-six years of experience in Congress. Against him stood the cool and unflappable Obama, a former community organizer and law professor. McCain took a risk in selecting the folksy Sarah Palin, then governor of Alaska, as his vice-presidential running mate. Obama made a comparatively safe choice and partnered with the seasoned Joe Biden, a senator from Delaware. On the campaign trail, Palin hammered away at Obama’s past contact with a 1960s-era radical named Bill Ayers (they were once on a charitable foundation together). McCain painted Obama as dangerously untested and even naïve. Unfazed, Obama repeatedly tied McCain’s voting record and policies to the deeply unpopular President George W. Bush. Obama’s soaring speeches were laced with calls for common purpose and hope for a better day. Chants of “Yes we can!” resounded at his huge rallies.

Pollsters initially predicted a tight race. But then, an economic calamity transformed the election and paved the way for a decisive and historic result. Ever since the collapse of brokerage house Bear Stearns in March 2008, a worried Wall Street struggled to contain the damage from the subprime loan crisis. In early September, anxiety gave way to panic. Saddled with billions in worthless mortgage-backed securities, or “**toxic assets**,” Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac—holding about half of the nation’s mortgage debt—were placed under government control. Later that month came the bankruptcies of brokerage giant Lehman Brothers and the huge savings bank Washington Mutual; the fire-sale acquisition of investment bank Merrill Lynch; and the government bailout of the country’s largest insurance company, AIG. After a decade when both Washington and American consumers had plunged deeply into

Barack Obama Forty-fourth U.S. president; first African-American to occupy the Oval Office

toxic assets Investments comprised of bundled mortgages, which were revealed to be nearly worthless when the real estate market collapsed in 2008



Joe Raedle/Getty Images new/Getty Images

Homeowners Face a Crisis as Recession Hits

As unemployment rose and retirement savings shrunk in value, many homeowners could not meet their mortgage payments. An enterprising real-estate agent in Coral Gables, Florida, organized a "Foreclosure Boat Tour" for potential buyers of foreclosed homes.

debt, the chickens now came home to roost. In 2008, U.S. banks wrote off \$41 billion in unpaid credit-card debt.

The news on Main Street was just as dire. The Dow Jones Industrial Average, a bellwether for retirement accounts, fell 35 percent; consumer confidence plunged; and millions of homeowners faced foreclosure. The already weakened U.S. auto companies teetered toward bankruptcy. In 2008, 2.6 million workers lost their jobs, the highest rate of loss in sixty years. (Meanwhile, as late as December 2008, after fourth-quarter losses of \$15 billion, Merrill Lynch's CEO doled out millions in bonuses to company executives and spent \$2.2 million redecorating his office.) Some economists warned darkly of a "second Great Depression."

President Bush tried to ease the global credit crisis with a \$700 billion financial rescue package, called the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). But conservative Republicans in Congress opposed it and many voters saw it as a boondoggle for corporate malefactors. In a moment of high political drama, John McCain abruptly left the campaign trail and went to Washington to save the imperiled rescue package. In the end, both McCain and Obama voted for the bill, which passed. But the incident

exposed McCain to attacks that he was “erratic” and linked him more closely to the unpopular George W. Bush. Obama’s poll numbers shot up.

On Election Day, Obama took 53 percent of the popular vote and made deep inroads into Republican strongholds, winning North Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and Indiana. Democrats gained eighteen seats in the House and six in the Senate, padding their lead in both chambers. While Republicans lamented their bad luck, Democrats hailed the outcome as a repudiation of Republican policies and a final verdict on the Bush years. Among eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds, only 32 percent voted for McCain—an ill omen for Republicans’ future hopes.

Beyond partisan politics lay deeper meanings. Significantly, the topic of race rarely appeared on the campaign trail. Fears that white Americans would refuse to vote for a black president proved largely unfounded. A majority of whites under the age of thirty and about two-thirds of all Hispanics voted for Obama. It was no doubt too early to conclude that America had entered a “post-racial” age. But it was also clear that something remarkable had happened. Barack Obama—a minority citizen—had been chosen to lead the world’s most powerful nation. Facing looming problems at home and abroad, and with hope intermixed with fear, America prepared to inaugurate its first black president on January 20, 2009—almost exactly one hundred years after the founding of the NAACP.

A New Beginning and an Enduring Spirit

Barack Obama was born in Hawaii in 1961, the son of a Kenyan university student and his white wife, an anthropologist from Kansas. After college and Harvard Law School, he worked as a community organizer in Chicago rather than joining a law firm, and in 1996 he won election to the Illinois legislature.

In his inaugural address, President Obama marveled that sixty years earlier, his father could have been denied service in Washington restaurants. He rejected what he called the “worn out dogmas” that blocked bold responses to urgent problems at home and abroad. “[S]turdy alliances and enduring convictions,” he said, were as important as military might in achieving security. America’s “patchwork heritage” of differing ethnicities and national origins was no liability, he declared, but a great asset as the nation sought to restore its battered reputation in an equally diverse world.

Obama named Hillary Clinton secretary of state. She quickly appointed two seasoned diplomats as special envoys to address the volatile Afghanistan and Pakistan region and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Obama’s choice as attorney general, Eric Holder, forthrightly declared in his Senate confirmation hearing that water boarding, the interrogation technique used on some Guantánamo prisoners, constituted torture and would not be allowed. In January 2009, Obama signed an executive order stating that Guantánamo would be closed within a year. However, Congress resisted. By 2011, much to the dismay of civil-liberties advocates, Obama had failed to close Guantánamo and had resumed the practice of trying terrorist suspects in military, as opposed to civil, courts—essentially continuing two Bush-era policies that candidate Obama had opposed on the campaign trail.

Obama lifted Bush’s ban on stem-cell research and named Steven Chu, a Nobel laureate in physics and advocate of alternative energy sources, to lead the Department of Energy. Reversing Bush-administration policy, Obama announced that by

2016 all new vehicles would be required to meet the tougher fuel-efficiency standards already adopted by California and other states. The new Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, formerly president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, led Obama's recession-fighting team. (Ironically, he had supported the deregulatory legislation that helped lay the groundwork for the crisis.)

In February 2009, Obama signed a \$787 billion economic-stimulus bill. It channeled \$120 billion to states for highways, school construction, and other infrastructure projects and cut taxes for middle- and lower-income Americans. Ominously, despite Obama's pleas for bipartisanship, only three Senate Republicans voted for the bill. In July 2010, Obama signed into law the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which had narrowly passed through Congress via a party-line vote. The new law significantly reorganized the country's existing financial regulatory agencies while creating a new one, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, to enforce fair lending standards.

While the administration threw a lifeline to the ailing auto industry in the form of a multibillion-dollar emergency bailout, Obama created a White House task force to oversee the industry's long-term restructuring. Chrysler filed for bankruptcy, though a takeover by the Italian automaker Fiat brightened its long-term prospects. As once-mighty General Motors filed for bankruptcy as well, Americans realized the depth of the crisis facing this core domestic industry. Remarkably, after enduring two painful years of steep losses and layoffs, by 2011 General Motors had repaid money loaned to it by the government (plus interest) and had even returned to profitability.

Despite the economic crisis, Obama pursued his top domestic goal, health-care reform, to control runaway costs while extending coverage to the uninsured. Securing cost-cutting pledges from the drug industry, health insurers, hospital associations, and other key players, Obama called on Congress to enact comprehensive health-care legislation.



Orjan E. Ellingsrud/Dagbladet Hordaland/Corbis

Debating Health Care

With his eye on the cameras, an angry citizen berates Pennsylvania senator Arlen Specter in an August 2009 "town hall" meeting in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, discussing health-care reform.

Reform momentum soon slowed, however. As Congress members returned to their districts, they confronted agitated voters fearful of change. Some critics resorted to scare tactics, conjuring visions of government "death panels" that would deny care to the elderly or terminally ill. As they had since President Truman's day, opponents warned of "socialized medicine" and "a government-run health-care system," even though Medicare, the federal health-insurance program for the elderly, enjoyed broad popularity. The pharmaceutical and health-insurance industries, profiting handsomely under the present system, opposed any cost-control regulations beyond what they had already pledged voluntarily.

Reform proponents, by contrast, pointed to the millions of uninsured Americans, the loss of coverage that often came with

unemployment, insurance companies' denial of coverage to high-risk applicants, and the spiraling overall costs of U.S. health care in contrast to other nations with comparable or better medical outcomes.

The loudest opposition to health-care reform came from the so-called **Tea Party**, a loose coalition of citizen groups opposed to big government and activist judges. The Tea Party's name, large outdoor rallies, populist rhetoric, and use of patriotic symbols (notably, the "Don't Tread On Me" Gadsden Flag, which emerged as the movement's standard) tapped into the historical legacy of the Antifederalist movement of the 1780s (see Chapter 6). Like the Antifederalists, they bore a deep suspicion of centralized power and defended personal liberty against government tyranny. Critics, however, pointed out that society had changed greatly since the 1780s and questioned the claim that Tea Party members were oppressed. Surveys showed that they were older, whiter, wealthier, and more educated than average Americans.

Tea Party Conservative or libertarian movement opposed to big government and the Obama administration

Millions identified themselves as "teabaggers." Former Alaska governor Sarah Palin, now a media star and a favorite of the Tea Party, put a face on the movement. But the Tea Party lacked central leadership. In addition, it resisted the temptation to form a separate political party, making it an unpredictable force. In 2010, the movement's political influence was felt most dramatically within the Republican Party. In the primary elections, Tea Party-backed upstarts in New York, Nevada, and Florida defeated prominent moderate Republicans, pushing the party to the Right. In April 2011, the new Tea Party congressional caucus flexed its muscles in the budget debate and pressured the Republican leadership to insist on large spending cuts—nearly forcing a legislative showdown that would have shut down the federal government for the first time in fifteen years.

The emergence of the Tea Party hardened the politics of health-care reform. Even Democrats were divided. Congressional Democrats from conservative districts favored a cautious, incremental approach. Democratic liberals, by contrast, supported a "public option," a government health insurance program supplementing the private system, that would provide a yardstick for efficient, lower-cost coverage. When Massachusetts Democratic senator Edward Kennedy died in August 2009 and voters elected Republican Scott Brown to replace him, the Democratic supermajority in the Senate, and all hope for a public option, vanished.

The end result, the **Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act** of March 2010, represented a major milestone in the history of health care in the United States. The law guaranteed coverage for all patients, even those with pre-existing medical conditions; mandated health insurance for most Americans; and provided subsidies to poor Americans so they could afford health insurance premiums. But while the law's defenders promised that it would reduce the federal budget deficit and expand coverage to millions of uninsured Americans, it was nevertheless a compromise that satisfied few and angered many. Too small to provide the efficiency of public plans, but large enough to be lampooned as a "government takeover of health care," the law faced an uncertain fate in the courts, where it faced constitutional challenges. Politically, health-care reform emerged as a defining issue in the 2010 midterm elections and the early stages of the 2012 presidential election.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
Health-care reform mandating and expanding insurance coverage

As the 2010 midterm elections approached, unemployment hovered at around 9.5 percent for the entire year and millions of homes were in foreclosure. Democratic strategists predicted a tough slog. But few predicted such a shockingly lopsided

result. Pledging to cut the massive federal budget deficit and repeal “Obamacare,” as they called it, Republicans gained six seats in the Senate and sixty-three seats in the House. Republican John Boehner replaced Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House. The election also produced a number of new Republican governors, including Scott Walker of Wisconsin, who in early 2011 led an effort to strip away the collective bargaining rights of unions representing public sector employees.

A chastened Obama admitted that his party had taken a “shellacking.” His supporters were troubled. The traits that made Obama attractive as a candidate in 2008—a pragmatic, non-ideological approach; a cool, detached demeanor; and an instinct to seek common ground—now seemed ill-suited to an historical moment that demanded pugnacity and bold action. Obama was failing where Ronald Reagan had succeeded: to frame policies as part of clearly articulated values and beliefs.

Nevertheless, Obama’s first two years in office produced a record of reform unmatched since the administration of Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s. New laws expanded access to health care and established new financial regulations. In its final months, the lame-duck 111th Congress extended Bush-era tax cuts and ratified the New Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (New START) with Russia. Fulfilling an Obama campaign pledge, it also ended the military’s “Don’t ask, don’t tell” policy (see Chapter 30), which since 1993 had prevented openly gay citizens from serving in the nation’s armed services. Obama also appointed a third woman to the Supreme Court, Elena Kagan, to fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Justice John Paul



David Batigate/Corbis News/Corbis

U.S. Soldiers in Afghanistan Discuss Tactics for Combating the Taliban

As home-front support for the conflict wavered, American diplomats and military leaders faced major challenges in defining and achieving U.S. objectives in this region of the world.

Stevens. By early 2011, a modest economic recovery had begun to take root and unemployment fell below 9 percent.

Meanwhile, the ten-year war in Afghanistan ground on, with uncertain prospects. With some ninety thousand GIs deployed in that country (plus about forty-two thousand NATO troops), U.S. fatalities by April 2011 exceeded 1,400, with thousands more wounded. As the Islamic fundamentalists known as the Taliban regained control in southern Afghanistan, they weakened the U.S.-backed government of President Hamid Karzai and destabilized neighboring Pakistan as well. Rampant government corruption, accusations of fraud in the elections of August 2009 and September 2010, and Afghanistan's leading role in the cultivation of opium poppies from which heroin is manufactured further complicated the picture. In December 2009, Obama announced that another thirty thousand troops would be sent to Afghanistan, while also setting 2014 as the withdrawal date for American forces there.

A stunning development in May 2011 seemed to increase the likelihood of U.S. troop withdrawals from Afghanistan. In the early morning hours of May 2, 2011, U.S. Navy SEALs launched a daring raid on a compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, where they found, and killed, Osama bin Laden and several others. This ended a nearly decade-long manhunt for the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks. In the weeks after the raid, al Qaeda named a new chief and vowed revenge, while President Obama's approval ratings soared and commentators speculated about the future. Some congressmen, noting that bin Laden was hiding in plain sight just a mile from a major Pakistan army base, questioned Pakistan's reliability as an ally in the war against the Taliban. Moreover, the killing of Osama bin Laden prompted new questions about the war itself, since the central justification of the Afghanistan war was to prevent the Taliban from giving safe haven to al Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

When President Obama was unexpectedly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October 2009, after only nine months in office, it was widely viewed as a gesture of support for his good intentions and an expression of hope for the future—a hope widely shared in a war-weary nation and world. The democratic uprisings that ousted the despots who ruled Tunisia and Egypt in early 2011 elevated hopes that the frontiers of democracy and freedom could be expanded through peaceful means, as opposed to military invasion. Still, Obama continued to cast the Afghan struggle as a “war of necessity.” As casualties mounted, home-front support eroded. Ironically, antiwar sentiment was strongest in Obama's own party, while conservative Republicans provided a core of support. Obama's well wishers recalled nervously how the Vietnam War had undermined Lyndon Johnson's domestic program, and how the Iraq War had eroded George W. Bush's effectiveness.

The nation faced uncertain times, but also possessed a history of overcoming challenges and discovering sources of renewal. As President Obama declared in his inaugural address: “The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit, to choose our better history, to carry forward that precious gift . . . passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness.”

CHECKING IN

- Bush's plan to privatize social security faltered; a new Medicare drug benefit program, added to the costs of the military operation in Iraq, resulted in ballooning budget deficits.
- Hurricane Katrina obliterated much of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast; the federal response was widely viewed as inadequate.
- Bush appointed two conservatives, John Roberts and Samuel Alito, Jr., to the U.S. Supreme Court; a series of high-profile political scandals disgusted voters.
- Various proposals to reform immigration policy failed, leaving the issue unresolved; Democrats reclaimed the House and Senate in the 2006 midterm elections.
- Falling housing values and rising gas prices deepened the electorate's petulant mood; a yearning for change manifested in the 2008 presidential primaries, when voters showed a preference for antiestablishment candidates.
- Barack Obama, in the face of a conservative movement called the Tea Party, oversaw historic reforms to the health-care and financial industries and also expanded U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

In 2001, while accepting the Nobel Peace Prize a few weeks after 9/11, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said: “We have entered the third millennium through a gate of fire.”

But Annan went on to evoke the vision that had inspired the UN’s founders in 1945. Despite the hatred and inequalities dividing nations and peoples, he insisted, the fate of all Earth’s inhabitants is interconnected. The task of the twenty-first century, he said, is to achieve “a new, more profound awareness of the sanctity and dignity of every human life, regardless of race or religion. . . . Humanity is indivisible.”

As we conclude this history of America and its people, what is the “enduring vision” of our title? There is, of course, no single vision, but many. That is part of America’s meaning. Nor is this a vision of a preordained national destiny unfolding effortlessly, but rather of successive generations’ laborious, often frustrating struggle to define what their common life as a people should be. For all the failures, setbacks, and wrong turns, the shared visions, at their best, are rooted in hope, not fear. In 1980, Jesse de la Cruz, a Mexican-American woman who fought for years to improve conditions for California’s migrant workers, summed up the philosophy that kept her going: “Is America progressing toward the better? . . . We’re the ones that are gonna do it. We have to keep on struggling. . . . With us, there’s a saying: *La esperanza muere al ultimo*. Hope dies last. You can’t lose hope. If you lose hope, that’s losing every thing.”

Chapter Summary

How did the Bush administration respond to the September 11, 2001, attacks, internationally and domestically? (page 776)

The 9/11 attacks catapulted the United States into a shadowy war on terrorism. An American-led coalition invaded Afghanistan to drive out al Qaeda and overthrow the Islamic Taliban government. At home, a new cabinet-level agency, the Department of Homeland Security, was created; in addition, Congress enacted the controversial Patriot Act. Bush identified Iraq as part of an “axis of evil” that also included North Korea and Iran. The administration claimed that Saddam Hussein was linked to al Qaeda and that he was building weapons of mass destruction (neither claim turned out to be accurate). With little global support, Bush invaded Iraq and routed Saddam Hussein; a major insurgency followed, fueled largely by sectarian conflicts among the Iraqi people.

Beyond security concerns, what economic and social issues did Bush address in his first term? (page 782)

The collapse of the technology sector of the stock market triggered a recession. The spectacular bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation was only the first of a succession of corporate scandals involving misconduct by top management. On the domestic front, Bush pursued a conservative agenda, including massive tax cuts, education reform called “No Child Left Behind,” an energy bill that provided tax breaks to energy companies, and opposition to stem-cell research. Bush won reelection in 2004 by stressing national security and moral issues. Republicans increased their control in Congress.

KEY TERMS

September 11, 2001 (p. 776)
 Colin Powell (p. 776)
 Richard (Dick) Cheney (p. 777)
 Donald Rumsfeld (p. 777)
 al Qaeda (p. 779)
 Guantánamo Bay (p. 779)
 USA-Patriot Act (p. 779)
 Department of Homeland Security (p. 779)
 neoconservatives (p. 780)
 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) (p. 783)
 “No Child Left Behind” (p. 783)
 John Kerry (p. 784)
 global warming (p. 790)
 Kyoto Accords (p. 791)
 World Trade Organization (WTO) (p. 795)
 Hurricane Katrina (p. 798)

What challenges faced the United States in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world after 2000? (page 786)

Domestic support for the war eroded amid worsening sectarian violence in Iraq, revelations of abuses by the U.S. military and domestic spying in the name of security, and skepticism about the administration's case for invading Iraq. Other troubling world developments included worsening Israeli-Palestinian relations, nuclear programs in North Korea and Iran, and China's growing economic and military power. As global warming and other environmental hazards roused concern, the Bush administration downplayed the threat and rejected international efforts to address the problem.

KEY TERMS continued

Barack Obama (p. 801)

toxic assets (p. 801)

Tea Party (p. 805)

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (p. 805)

What demographic and economic trends have most shaped contemporary America? (page 791)

Major social trends in these years included continuing migration to the South and West, chronic inner-city problems, and increasing ethnic diversity as the Hispanic and Asian populations grew. Increased immigration, especially from Latin America and Asia, ignited a debate about whether such an influx could be assimilated and whether American diversity would be a melting pot or a salad bowl in which ethnic identities remained strong. On the economic front, the long-term shift from industrial production to an information-based and service economy proceeded, and a massive tide of foreign imports stirred uneasiness, especially in the troubled domestic auto industry.

What were the most pressing domestic issues after 2004? (page 796)

In his troubled second term, Bush persuaded Congress to pass a costly prescription-drug benefit for Medicare recipients. The administration's inadequate response to Hurricane Katrina prompted questions about its competence. Riding a wave of voter discontent, Democrats reclaimed control of Congress in the 2006 midterm elections. As the Iraq War dragged on, the housing market collapsed, and gas prices spiked, the dominant theme in the early stages of the 2008 presidential campaign was "change." Republicans chose Arizona senator John McCain whereas Democrats opted for Illinois senator Barack Obama. Obama won a decisive victory in the general election and became the nation's first African-American president. In his first two years in office, Barack Obama oversaw landmark reforms to the health-care and financial industries. His early presidency was also marked by the emergence of the libertarian-themed Tea Party and the expansion of U.S. military engagement in Afghanistan.



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DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776

The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all

having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriation of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws, giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments;

For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy of the head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country,

to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

He has excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms; our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have we been wanting in our attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity; and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

JOHN HANCOCK [*President*]
[and fifty-five others]

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PREAMBLE

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I

Section 1. All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Section 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several States, and the electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature.

No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the age of twenty-five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, *which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons.* The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative; *and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.*

When vacancies happen in the representation from any State, the Executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers; and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

Section 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, *chosen by the legislature thereof*, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three classes. The seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, of the second class at the expiration of the fourth year, and of the third class at the expiration of the sixth year, so that one-third may be chosen every second year; and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise, during the recess of the legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies.

No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years, and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President *pro tempore*, in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the office of the President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments. When sitting for that purpose, they shall be on oath or affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside; and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two-thirds of the members present.

Judgment in cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from the office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor,

trust or profit under the United States; but the party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment and punishment, according to law.

Section 4. The times, places and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each State by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to the places of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting *shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.*

Section 5. Each house shall be the judge of the elections, returns and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each shall constitute a quorum to do business; but a smaller number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the attendance of absent members, in such manner, and under such penalties, as each house may provide.

Each house may determine the rules of its proceedings, punish its members for disorderly behavior, and with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

Each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may in their judgment require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

Neither house, during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which the two houses shall be sitting.

Section 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be ascertained by law and paid out of the treasury of the United States. They shall in all cases except treason, felony and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any speech or debate in either house, they shall not be questioned in any other place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States, which

shall have been created, or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased, during such time; and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office.

Section 7. All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.

Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it with objections to that house in which it originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such reconsideration two-thirds of that house shall agree to pass the bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other house, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and, if approved by two-thirds of that house, it shall become a law. But in all such cases the votes of both houses shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against the bill shall be entered on the journal of each house respectively. If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law, in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their adjournment prevent its return, in which case it shall not be a law.

Every order, resolution, or vote to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two-thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the rules and limitations prescribed in the case of a bill.

Section 8. The Congress shall have power

To lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States; but all duties, imposts and excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian tribes;

To establish an uniform rule of naturalization, and uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the standard of weights and measures;

To provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States;

To establish post offices and post roads;

To promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries;

To constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court;

To define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas and offenses against the law of nations;

To declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water;

To raise and support armies, but no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years;

To provide and maintain a navy;

To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;

To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever, over such district (not exceeding ten miles square) as may, by cession of particular States, and the acceptance of Congress, become the seat of government of the United States, and to exercise like authority over all places purchased by the consent of the legislature of the State, in which the same shall be, for erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings;—and

To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof.

Section 9. *The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year 1808; but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding \$10 for each person.*

The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety may require it.

No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed.

No capitation, or other direct, tax shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No tax or duty shall be laid on articles exported from any State.

No preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one State over those of another; nor shall vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay duties in another.

No money shall be drawn from the treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law; and a regular statement and account of the receipts and expenditures of all public money shall be published from time to time.

No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States: and no person holding any office of profit or trust under them, shall, without the consent of the Congress, accept of any present, emolument, office, or title, of any kind whatever, from any king, prince, or foreign state.

Section 10. No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, ex post facto law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobility.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports, except

what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws: and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any State on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of the Congress.

No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State, or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE II

Section 1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows:

Each state shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress; but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.

The electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a list of all the persons voted for, and of the number of votes for each; which list they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, open all the certificates, and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such majority, and have an equal number of votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by ballot one of them for President; and if no person have a majority, then from the five highest on the list said house shall in like manner choose the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all

the States shall be necessary to a choice. In every case, after the choice of the President, the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal votes, the Senate shall choose from them by ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the time of choosing the electors and the day on which they shall give their votes; which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No person except a natural-born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation, or inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated times, receive for his services a compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that period any other emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the execution of his office, he shall take the following oath or affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Section 2. The President shall be commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several States, when called into the actual service of the United States; he may require the opinion, in writing, of the principal officer in each of the executive departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices, and he shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons for offenses against the United States, except in cases of impeachment.

He shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law: but Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

The President shall have power to fill up all vacancies that may happen during the recess of the Senate, by granting commissions which shall expire at the end of their next session.

Section 3. He shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary occasions, convene both houses, or either of them, and in case of disagreement between them, with respect to the time of adjournment, he may adjourn them to such time as he shall think proper; he shall receive ambassadors and other public ministers; he shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed, and shall commission all the officers of the United States.

Section 4. The President, Vice President and all civil officers of the United States shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and on conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

ARTICLE III

Section 1. The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges, both of the Supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

Section 2. The judicial power shall extend to all cases, in law and equity, arising under this Constitution, the

laws of the United States, and treaties made, or which shall be made, under their authority;—to all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls;—to all cases of admiralty and maritime jurisdiction;—to controversies to which the United States shall be a party;—to controversies between two or more States;—*between a State and citizens of another State*;—between citizens of different States;—between citizens of the same State claiming lands under grants of different States, and between a State, or the citizens thereof, and foreign states, citizens or subjects.

In all cases affecting ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and those in which a State shall be party, the Supreme Court shall have original jurisdiction. In all the other cases before mentioned, the Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction, both as to law and fact, with such exceptions, and under such regulations, as the Congress shall make.

The trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury; and such trial shall be held in the State where said crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the trial shall be at such place or places as the Congress may by law have directed.

Section 3. Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort. No person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or on confession in open court.

The Congress shall have power to declare the punishment of treason, but no attainder of treason shall work corruption of blood, or forfeiture except during the life of the person attainted.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1. Full faith and credit shall be given in each State to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general laws prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

Section 2. The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States.

A person charged in any State with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another State, shall on demand of the executive authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having jurisdiction of the crime.

No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due.

Section 3. New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the junction of two or more States, or parts of States, without the consent of the legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

Section 4. The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened); against domestic violence.

ARTICLE V

The Congress, whenever two-thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose amendments to this Constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two-thirds of the several States, shall call a convention for proposing amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this Constitution, when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States, or by conventions in three-fourths thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the

Congress; provided *that no amendments which may be made prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any manner affect the first and fourth clauses in the ninth section of the first article*; and that no State, without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE VI

All debts contracted and engagements entered into, before the adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the members of the several State legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this Constitution; but no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.

ARTICLE VII

The ratification of the conventions of nine States shall be sufficient for the establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the same.

Done in Convention by the unanimous consent of the States present, the seventeenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the twelfth. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names.

[Signed by]
G° WASHINGTON
Presidt and Deputy from Virginia
[and thirty-eight others]

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

AMENDMENT I*

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

AMENDMENT II

A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

AMENDMENT III

No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

AMENDMENT IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

AMENDMENT V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation.

* The first ten Amendments (Bill of Rights) were adopted in 1791.

AMENDMENT VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

AMENDMENT VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

AMENDMENT VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

AMENDMENT IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

AMENDMENT X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, not prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

AMENDMENT XI [Adopted 1798]

The judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the United States by citizens of another State, or by citizens or subjects of any foreign state.

AMENDMENT XII [Adopted 1804]

The electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by ballot for President and Vice President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—the person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all the States shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before *the fourth day of March* next following, then the Vice President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.

The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice President shall be the Vice President, if such a number be a majority of the whole number of electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list the Senate shall choose the Vice President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice President of the United States.

AMENDMENT XIII [Adopted 1865]

Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XIV [Adopted 1868]

Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of Electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

Section 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress or Elector of President and Vice President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the

United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid and comfort to the enemies thereof. Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of each house, remove such disability.

Section 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations, and claims shall be held illegal and void.

Section 5. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

AMENDMENT XV [Adopted 1870]

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XVI [Adopted 1913]

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

AMENDMENT XVII [Adopted 1913]

Section 1. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of [voters for] the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

Section 2. When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority

of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, that the Legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the Legislature may direct.

Section 3. This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

AMENDMENT XVIII [Adopted 1919; repealed 1933]

Section 1. *After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, for beverage purposes, is hereby prohibited.*

Section 2. *The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.*

Section 3. *This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of the several States, as provided by the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission thereof to the States by the Congress.*

AMENDMENT XIX [Adopted 1920]

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XX [Adopted 1933]

Section 1. The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

Section 2. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on

the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

Section 3. If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President-elect shall have died, the Vice President-elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President-elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President-elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President-elect nor a Vice President-elect shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such persons shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.

Section 4. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

Section 5. Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

Section 6. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission.

AMENDMENT XXI [Adopted 1933]

Section 1. The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

Section 2. The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or Possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

Section 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the

Constitution, within seven years from the date of submission thereof to the States by the Congress.

AMENDMENT XXII [Adopted 1951]

Section 1. No person shall be elected to the office of President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of President more than once. But this article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

Section 2. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

AMENDMENT XXIII [Adopted 1961]

Section 1. The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as the Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXIV [Adopted 1964]

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President

or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.

Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXV [Adopted 1967]

Section 1. In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

Section 2. Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

Section 3. Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

Section 4. Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department[s] or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the

President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

AMENDMENT XXVI [Adopted 1971]

Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

Section 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXVII* [Adopted 1992]

No law, varying the compensation for services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of Representatives shall have intervened.

* Originally proposed in 1789 by James Madison, this amendment failed to win ratification along with the other parts of what became the Bill of Rights. However, the proposed amendment contained no deadline for ratification, and over the years other state legislatures voted to add it to the Constitution; many such ratifications occurred during the 1980s and early 1990s as public frustration with Congress's performance mounted. In May 1992 the Archivist of the United States certified that, with the Michigan legislature's ratification, the article had been approved by three-fourths of the states and thus automatically became part of the Constitution. But congressional leaders and constitutional specialists questioned whether an amendment that took 202 years to win ratification was valid, and the issue had not been resolved by the time this book went to press.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1789–2008

YEAR	STATES IN THE UNION	CANDIDATES	PARTIES	ELECTORAL VOTE	POPULAR VOTE	PERCENTAGE OF POPULAR VOTE
1789	11	GEORGE WASHINGTON John Adams Minor candidates	No party designations	69 34 35		
1792	15	GEORGE WASHINGTON John Adams George Clinton Minor candidates	No party designations	132 77 50 5		
1796	16	JOHN ADAMS Thomas Jefferson Thomas Pinckney Aaron Burr Minor candidates	Federalist Democratic-Republican Federalist Democratic-Republican	71 68 59 30 48		
1800	16	THOMAS JEFFERSON Aaron Burr John Adams Charles C. Pinckney John Jay	Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican Federalist Federalist Federalist	73 73 65 64 1		
1804	17	THOMAS JEFFERSON Charles C. Pinckney	Democratic-Republican Federalist	162 14		
1808	17	JAMES MADISON Charles C. Pinckney George Clinton	Democratic-Republican Federalist Democratic-Republican	122 47 6		
1812	18	JAMES MADISON DeWitt Clinton	Democratic-Republican Federalist	128 89		
1816	19	JAMES MONROE Rufus King	Democratic-Republican Federalist	183 34		
1820	24	JAMES MONROE John Quincy Adams	Democratic-Republican Independent Republican	231 1		
1824	24	JOHN QUINCY ADAMS Andrew Jackson William H. Crawford Henry Clay	Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican Democratic-Republican	84 99 41 37	108,740 153,544 46,618 47,136	30.5 43.1 13.1 13.2
1828	24	ANDREW JACKSON John Quincy Adams	Democratic National Republican	178 83	642,553 500,897	56.0 44.0
1832	24	ANDREW JACKSON Henry Clay William Wirt John Floyd	Democratic National Republican Anti-Masonic National Republican	219 49 7 11	687,502 530,189 33,108	55.0 42.4 2.6

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.

Before the Twelfth Amendment was passed in 1804, the Electoral College voted for two presidential candidates; the runner-up became vice president.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1789–2008 (*continued*)

YEAR	STATES IN THE UNION	CANDIDATES	PARTIES	ELECTORAL VOTE	POPULAR VOTE	PERCENTAGE OF POPULAR VOTE
1836	26	MARTIN VAN BUREN	Democratic	170	765,483	50.9
		William H. Harrison	Whig	73		
		Hugh L. White	Whig	26	739,795	49.1
		Daniel Webster	Whig	14		
		W. P. Mangum	Whig	11		
1840	26	WILLIAM H. HARRISON	Whig	234	1,274,624	53.1
		Martin Van Buren	Democratic	60	1,127,781	46.9
1844	26	JAMES K. POLK	Democratic	170	1,338,464	49.6
		Henry Clay	Whig	105	1,300,097	48.1
		James G. Birney	Liberty		62,300	2.3
1848	30	ZACHARY TAYLOR	Whig	163	1,360,967	47.4
		Lewis Cass	Democratic	127	1,222,342	42.5
		Martin Van Buren	Free Soil		291,263	10.1
1852	31	FRANKLIN PIERCE	Democratic	254	1,601,117	50.9
		Winfield Scott	Whig	42	1,385,453	44.1
		John P. Hale	Free Soil		155,825	5.0
1856	31	JAMES BUCHANAN	Democratic	174	1,832,955	45.3
		John C. Frémont	Republican	114	1,339,932	33.1
		Millard Fillmore	American	8	871,731	21.6
1860	33	ABRAHAM LINCOLN	Republican	180	1,865,593	39.8
		Stephen A. Douglas	Democratic	12	1,382,713	29.5
		John C. Breckinridge	Democratic	72	848,356	18.1
		John Bell	Constitutional Union	39	592,906	12.6
1864	36	ABRAHAM LINCOLN	Republican	212	2,206,938	55.0
		George B. McClellan	Democratic	21	1,803,787	45.0
1868	37	ULYSSES S. GRANT	Republican	214	3,013,421	52.7
		Horatio Seymour	Democratic	80	2,706,829	47.3
1872	37	ULYSSES S. GRANT	Republican	286	3,596,745	55.6
		Horace Greeley	Democratic	*	2,843,446	43.9
1876	38	RUTHERFORD B. HAYES	Republican	185	4,034,311	48.0
		Samuel J. Tilden	Democratic	184	4,288,546	51.0
		Peter Cooper	Greenback		75,973	1.0
1880	38	JAMES A. GARFIELD	Republican	214	4,453,295	48.5
		Winfield S. Hancock	Democratic	155	4,414,082	48.1
		James B. Weaver	Greenback-Labor		308,578	3.4
1884	38	GROVER CLEVELAND	Democratic	219	4,879,507	48.5
		James G. Blaine	Republican	182	4,850,293	48.2
		Benjamin F. Butler	Greenback-Labor		175,370	1.8
		John P. St. John	Prohibition		150,369	1.5

*When Greeley died shortly after the election, his supporters divided their votes among the minor candidates.

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1789–2008 (*continued*)

YEAR	STATES IN THE UNION	CANDIDATES	PARTIES	ELECTORAL VOTE	POPULAR VOTE	PERCENTAGE OF POPULAR VOTE
1888	38	BENJAMIN HARRISON	Republican	233	5,477,129	47.9
		Grover Cleveland	Democratic	168	5,537,857	48.6
		Clinton B. Fisk	Prohibition		249,506	2.2
		Anson J. Streeter	Union Labor		146,935	1.3
1892	44	GROVER CLEVELAND	Democratic	277	5,555,426	46.1
		Benjamin Harrison	Republican	145	5,182,690	43.0
		James B. Weaver	People's	22	1,029,846	8.5
		John Bidwell	Prohibition		264,133	2.2
1896	45	WILLIAM MCKINLEY	Republican	271	7,102,246	51.1
		William J. Bryan	Democratic	176	6,492,559	47.7
1900	45	WILLIAM MCKINLEY	Republican	292	7,218,491	51.7
		William J. Bryan	Democratic; Populist	155	6,356,734	45.5
		John C. Wooley	Prohibition		208,914	1.5
1904	45	THEODORE ROOSEVELT	Republican	336	7,628,461	57.4
		Alton B. Parker	Democratic	140	5,084,223	37.6
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		402,283	3.0
		Silas C. Swallow	Prohibition		258,536	1.9
1908	46	WILLIAM H. TAFT	Republican	321	7,675,320	51.6
		William J. Bryan	Democratic	162	6,412,294	43.1
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		420,793	2.8
		Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition		253,840	1.7
1912	48	WOODROW WILSON	Democratic	435	6,296,547	41.9
		Theodore Roosevelt	Progressive	88	4,118,571	27.4
		William H. Taft	Republican	8	3,486,720	23.2
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		900,672	6.0
		Eugene W. Chafin	Prohibition		206,275	1.4
1916	48	WOODROW WILSON	Democratic	277	9,127,695	49.4
		Charles E. Hughes	Republican	254	8,533,507	46.2
		A. L. Benson	Socialist		585,113	3.2
		J. Frank Hanly	Prohibition		220,506	1.2
1920	48	WARREN G. HARDING	Republican	404	16,143,407	60.4
		James N. Cox	Democratic	127	9,130,328	34.2
		Eugene V. Debs	Socialist		919,799	3.4
		P. P. Christensen	Farmer-Labor		265,411	1.0
1924	48	CALVIN COOLIDGE	Republican	382	15,718,211	54.0
		John W. Davis	Democratic	136	8,385,283	28.8
		Robert M. La Follette	Progressive	13	4,831,289	16.6
1928	48	HERBERT C. HOOVER	Republican	444	21,391,993	58.2
		Alfred E. Smith	Democratic	87	15,016,169	40.9
1932	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	472	22,809,638	57.4
		Herbert C. Hoover	Republican	59	15,758,901	39.7
		Norman Thomas	Socialist		881,951	2.2

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1789–2008 (*continued*)

YEAR	STATES IN THE UNION	CANDIDATES	PARTIES	ELECTORAL VOTE	POPULAR VOTE	PERCENTAGE OF POPULAR VOTE
1936	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	523	27,752,869	60.8
		Alfred M. Landon	Republican	8	16,674,665	36.5
		William Lemke	Union		882,479	1.9
1940	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	449	27,307,819	54.8
		Wendell L. Willkie	Republican	82	22,321,018	44.8
1944	48	FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Democratic	432	25,606,585	53.5
		Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	99	22,014,745	46.0
1948	48	HARRY S. TRUMAN	Democratic	303	24,105,812	49.5
		Thomas E. Dewey	Republican	189	21,970,065	45.1
		Strom Thurmond	States' Rights	39	1,169,063	2.4
		Henry A. Wallace	Progressive		1,157,172	2.4
1952	48	DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER	Republican	442	33,936,234	55.1
		Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	89	27,314,992	44.4
1956	48	DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER	Republican	457	35,590,472	57.6
		Adlai E. Stevenson	Democratic	73	26,022,752	42.1
1960	50	JOHN F. KENNEDY	Democratic	303	34,227,096	49.7
		Richard M. Nixon	Republican	219	34,108,546	49.5
		Harry F. Byrd	Independent	15	502,363	.7
1964	50	LYNDON B. JOHNSON	Democratic	486	43,126,506	61.1
		Barry M. Goldwater	Republican	52	27,176,799	38.5
1968	50	RICHARD M. NIXON	Republican	301	31,770,237	43.4
		Hubert H. Humphrey	Democratic	191	31,270,533	42.7
		George C. Wallace	American Independent	46	9,906,141	13.5
1972	50	RICHARD M. NIXON	Republican	520	47,169,911	60.7
		George S. McGovern	Democratic	17	29,170,383	37.5
1976	50	JIMMY CARTER	Democratic	297	40,827,394	49.9
		Gerald R. Ford	Republican	240	39,145,977	47.9
1980	50	RONALD W. REAGAN	Republican	489	43,899,248	50.8
		Jimmy Carter	Democratic	49	35,481,435	41.0
		John B. Anderson	Independent		5,719,437	6.6
		Ed Clark	Libertarian		920,859	1.0
1984	50	RONALD W. REAGAN	Republican	525	54,451,521	58.8
		Walter F. Mondale	Democratic	13	37,565,334	40.5
1988	50	GEORGE H. W. BUSH	Republican	426	47,946,422	54.0
		Michael S. Dukakis	Democratic	112	41,016,429	46.0
1992	50	WILLIAM J. CLINTON	Democratic	370	43,728,275	43.2
		George H. W. Bush	Republican	168	38,167,416	37.7
		H. Ross Perot	Independent		19,237,247	19.0

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1789–2008 (*continued*)

YEAR	STATES IN THE UNION	CANDIDATES	PARTIES	ELECTORAL VOTE	POPULAR VOTE	PERCENTAGE OF POPULAR VOTE
1996	50	WILLIAM J. CLINTON	Democratic	379	47,401,185	49.2
		Robert Dole	Republican	159	39,197,469	40.7
		H. Ross Perot	Reform		8,085,294	8.4
2000	50	GEORGE W. BUSH	Republican	271	50,456,141	47.9
		Albert Gore Jr.	Democratic	266	50,996,039	48.4
		Ralph Nader	Green		2,882,807	2.7
2004	50	GEORGE W. BUSH	Republican	286	60,608,582	51.0
		John Kerry	Democratic	252	57,288,974	48.0
		Ralph Nader	Independent		406,924	1.0
2008	50	BARACK OBAMA	Democratic	365	69,456,897	52.9
		John McCain	Republican	173	59,934,814	45.7

Because candidates receiving less than 1 percent of the popular vote are omitted, the percentage of popular vote may not total 100 percent.

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